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THE
HISTORY
OF A
POCKET PRAYER BOOK.

As to a form of prayer and ecclesiastical rites, I highly approve that it should be certain, from which it may not be lawful for any minister to depart.

JOHN CALVIN.

Next to the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer is the book of my understanding, and of my heart.—DR. ADAM CLARKE.

THE
HISTORY
OF A
POCKET PRAYER BOOK,
WRITTEN BY ITSELF.

Benjamin Doss.

GIVE ME THE PRAYERS OF MY MOTHER THE CHURCH;
THERE BE NONE LIKE HERS.—GEORGE HERBERT.

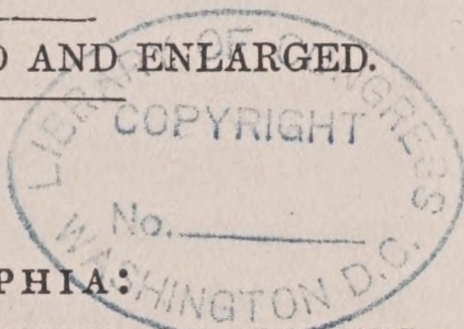


THIRD EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED.

PHILADELPHIA:

R. E. PETERSON, N. W. COR. FIFTH AND ARCH STS.

1850.



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PREFACE

TO THE THIRD REVISED EDITION.

THE following work, having passed through numerous editions, has now been revised by the author, and some new matter has been added, which, he trusts, will render it more acceptable and useful. He is encouraged in the hope that it has been, and will continue to be, an humble auxiliary in the cause of the Church, by the favourable notice which it has received from Church periodicals, at home and abroad; and from the fact that it has been republished, within a few years, by the Church Society of the diocese of Toronto, in Canada; who have given it the first place on their list of publications. But the most gratifying to his feelings is the commendation bestowed upon it by his estimable friend, the late Rev. William Parker, of London; who, for thirty-two

years, was the faithful secretary of the venerable Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. As that friend has now gone to his rest, the author feels a melancholy satisfaction in recording, in this place, the following extract from one of his letters ;

“Your History of a Pocket Prayer Book has long been a great favourite in my family. A copy of this very instructive little work was given some years ago by a pious clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, to my younger daughter, who is now the wife of the learned and excellent Chief Justice of New Zealand, the Honourable William Martin. In December last she sailed to join her husband, on board the *Tomatin*, in company with the Lord Bishop of New Zealand, his amiable lady, and a band of devoted clergymen, catechists, schoolmasters, &c. I have reason to believe that the judge and my dear daughter will zealously

co-operate with the bishop in every good work; and that she has been much encouraged to do so by the perusal of your little History.”

These hopeful anticipations of a pious parent have been fulfilled. Since the above extract was first printed, the author has received most interesting letters from Chief Justice Martin and his excellent lady, dated New Zealand, November, 1847, showing their devotedness to the cause of missions among the benighted people of that far-off island, and their united co-operation with their admirable bishop in his laborious work. A passage occurs in Mrs. Martin's letter, in reference to the present volume, which may appropriately follow that from the pen of her lamented father:

“Your little book, which interested me so much when I read it as a girl, has now been again and again read in New Zealand. I have lent it to many people, young and old, rich

and poor, and all have returned it with expressions of real satisfaction. The History of a Pocket Prayer Book is just the class of books needed here. We have most of us been parted from family ties and loving associations; and we must have church membership to draw and bind together hearts which otherwise seem to find no resting place. I am sure that the full blessing of our liturgical services grows continually more present to our minds, as we find ourselves separated from all the familiar and early associations of home and kindred. In the midst of strange scenes, on the sea or in a new land, we hear the words that comforted and taught us long ago; and we feel no longer exiles from those who remain behind. The loved ones for whom we so wept, that we should see their faces no more, are still with us in spirit, repeating the same prayers, offering the same thanksgivings, joining in the same high communion."

In preparing this volume for the press, the author's chief object is to recommend, in a plain familiar way, the doctrines and usages of his own church; and in doing this, he desires to "maintain and set forward, as much as in him lies, quietness, peace, and love, among all Christian people." He thinks, with that humble and holy man of God, good old Richard Hooker, that "there will come a time, when three words uttered with charity and meekness, shall receive a far more blessed reward, than three thousand volumes written with disdainful sharpness of wit;" and he desires always to speak and write under this conviction.

The chief recommendation of the present work is, that it is based mainly upon facts; most of the scenes and incidents having actually occurred, at the time and in the manner as here related; and many of them having come under the personal observation of the author.

A few of the scenes are purely imaginary ; that in chapter fourteenth is one ; the narrative there being designed to exhibit the advantage of the Prayer Book to the convicts in our prisons. The story of the Congregational minister, in chapter third, is taken from Chandler's life of Dr. Johnson. The account of the missionary, in chapter sixth, is in the main literally true. The conversation, in chapter twelfth, is given almost word for word as it occurred. The history of the layman, in chapter thirteenth, and his successful efforts in building up a church, are true to the letter. The character of the benevolent widow, in chapter fifteenth, is a faithful portrait of one of the most humble and devoted Christians, now no more, that the present age has been blessed with. The scene on board the steamboat, in chapter sixteenth, is slightly varied from a narrative given by an intimate friend of the young man there mentioned, whose family be-

longed to the author's parish ; and the obituary notice, with which the chapter closes, is taken from a Charleston paper, published at the time of his decease. The seventeenth chapter is added to this edition, to render the work more useful to seamen. The author's visit to Oneida Castle, in company with Bishop Hobart, as related in chapter eighteenth, and his subsequent visit to Green Bay, are both given with an exact adherence to actual circumstances. Many other scenes and incidents, founded on facts, have been woven into the history ; and it is believed that nothing will be found in the following pages, which does not come within the limits of reasonable probability.

If any apology is necessary for introducing the Prayer Book as its own historian, the author can only say, that he thought it the easiest and best method of imparting interest to the whole subject ; and that he had many excellent precedents to justify him. Such fictions

have oftentimes been profitably employed in conveying instruction.

The author now sends this little volume abroad into the world, with fervent prayers that the divine blessing may go with it; and in the humble hope that it may be instrumental, in some degree, in directing those who are seeking for "the old paths," into that "good and right way," which leadeth to everlasting life.

BENJAMIN DORR.

PHILADELPHIA, APRIL 18, 1850.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
CHAPTER I. - - - - -	19
Reasons for writing this History.—The Prayer Book's Ancestors.—Their Persecutions.—When and where first introduced to the world.	
CHAPTER II. - - - - -	27
A Christmas Present.—Family Prayers.—Christmas Day.—Decoration of the Church.—The Sermon.—How the rest of the day was passed.	
CHAPTER III. - - - - -	37
Confirmation.—The Prayer Book falls into the hands of a Congregational Minister.—The use he makes of it.—Prepares to take Orders in the Church.—Gives his Prayer Book to an Emigrant.	
CHAPTER IV. - - - - -	45
Travels in Western New York.—An Emigrant's Life.—A Union Church.—Lay Reading.	

	Page.
CHAPTER V. - - - - -	57
Lay Reading continued.—Religious dissensions among the various sects.—Accessions to the Church.	
CHAPTER VI. - - - - -	63
Arrival of an Episcopal Minister.—Father N—, the Missionary.—Divine Service.—Baptism.—The Sermon.—Holy Communion.	
CHAPTER VII. - - - - -	79
Church built.—Visit of another Missionary, the Rev. D. Phelps.—His character.—Church Consecrated.—Confirmation.	
CHAPTER VIII. - - - - -	89
Visit of the Rev. Mr. P——.—His kindness to Children.—The Prayer Book resumes its travels with him.—Joy at Mr. P——'s return.—Description of his residence.—He visits his parishioners.—Their affection for him.	
CHAPTER IX. - - - - -	99
Character of Mr. P——.—Importance of parochial Visitation.—Sunday-school Instruction.—Qualifications of Teachers.—Public Catechising.	

	Page.
CHAPTER X. - - - - -	- 107

A new acquaintance.—A candid inquirer after “the old paths.”—The Prayer Book passes into other hands.—Prejudices against the Church, resulting from ignorance of her Character and Claims.—Episcopal Theologians.—Eloquent tribute of a Presbyterian Divine to Episcopacy.

CHAPTER XI. - - - - -	- 123
-----------------------	-------

Doctrines of the Church.—Necessity of a change of heart.—Comprehensiveness of the Prayer Book.—Advantages of Public Formularies.—Calvin’s opinion on this subject.—Length of the Daily Service.

CHAPTER XII. - - - - -	- 137
------------------------	-------

The Prayer Book is sent by Mr. L——, a present to his Mother.—His letter.—How received by the good lady.—Her prejudices against the Church.—How removed.—An interesting Conversation.—Undesigned eulogium on the Office for Family Devotion.

CHAPTER XIII. - - - - -	- 151
-------------------------	-------

The Prayer Book resumes its travels.—Autumnal Scenery.—Journey through Ohio and Pennsyl-

	Page.
vania.—Mineral Springs at B——.—Church service in a Presbyterian house of worship.—Returns to New York.—Unexpected separation from its master.—Comes into possession of a layman.—Witnesses the gathering of a new congregation, and the erection of another Church, in South-western New York.	
CHAPTER XIV. - - - - -	163
Unlooked-for separation.—A young Convict.—Form of Prayer for the Visitation of Prisoners.—A penitent Criminal.—Advantage of Prayer Books in our State Prison.—The Convict released.	
CHAPTER XV. - - - - -	177
The Prayer Book again changes hands.—An aged Christian Widow.—Her character.—Acts of Charity.—Saturday-school for the Poor.	
CHAPTER XVI. - - - - -	187
The Prayer Book is presented to a Clergyman, who resigns his parish on account of ill health.—His last Sermon.—Leaves home for the South.—Sail down the Hudson.—Early Reminiscences.—Steamboat Adventure.—Eloquent defence of the Church.—Obituary notice of the Rev. Mr. N——.	

	Page.
CHAPTER XVII. - - - - -	- 203

The Prayer Book is given to a Sailor.—Good Advice.—Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea.—Mariner's Church.—Sailor's Home.—Voyage to Liverpool.—Daily service on ship-board.—Return Voyage.—Sickness and Death.—Burial at Sea.

CHAPTER XVIII. - - - - -	- 223
--	-------

Visit to the Oneida Indians, in New York.—Interesting religious services among them.—Confirmation.—Communion.—An Indian Council.—The Liturgy admirably adapted to the circumstances of the heathen.—Duty of Christians in reference to the Indian tribes.

CHAPTER XIX. - - - - -	- 235
--	-------

Oneidas at Green Bay.—Prayer Book's extensive travels.—Interesting statistics of the Church.—Tour through the Southern and South-western States.—Bishop of Tennessee.—Interesting anecdotes of him, and of the Bishop of North Carolina.

CHAPTER XX. - - - - -	- 243
---	-------

Tour through the great Lakes to the Wisconsin Territory.—Diocese of New York; its rapid growth.—Detroit; prosperity of the Church there.

—Mackinac; lay reading by an Officer of the Fort.—Green Bay Mission School.—Oneida Indians at Duck Creek.—Their zeal and liberality.—Bishop of Michigan's visit to them.—The Prayer Book finishes its travels, and settles quietly down in a parish.

CHAPTER XXI. - - - - - 255

The more the Liturgy is studied, the more it will be prized.—Testimony of the Rev. Adam Clarke.—The Prayer Book's parting advice.—Concluding reflections.

THE HISTORY
OF A
POCKET PRAYER BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

Reasons for writing this History.—The Prayer Book's Ancestors.—Their Persecutions.—When and where first introduced to the world.

IN giving my history to the world, it is in justice due to myself to say, that I do it with a sincere desire of benefiting mankind. Having had much experience by travelling through various parts of our country, and, from my close intimacy with a great variety of persons, having obtained a deep insight into human character, the account of what I have seen and heard may serve to amuse and instruct

my friends, and possibly do away some of the prejudices of such of my enemies as may chance to read this brief memoir.

I am descended from an ancient and noble family, which can be traced back to the first years of the Christian era. My ancestors were eminent for their piety and learning, and especially for their thorough acquaintance with, and deep reverence for, the Holy Scriptures; and for many hundred years have borne a conspicuous part in all the great events which have taken place in the Christian Church, as all ecclesiastical history will show. They were particularly distinguished in England, during that highly interesting and important period called the Reformation; and numbered among their warmest friends, the Cranmers, the Latimers, and the Ridleys, of that day. The part they then took was marked by sound sense and discretion, as well as by fervent piety and zeal. They became, in fact, the

glory of the Reformation; and have ever since been considered the most able defenders of the Protestant cause, and the most successful opposers of heresy and error, in all Christendom. Yet, notwithstanding they have done so much for the support and diffusion of pure religion, they have often met with violent abuse from persons of weak minds, who had been taught to look upon them as dangerous heretics; but those old prejudices have happily worn away, and the meed of praise is now awarded them, by those who were loudest in their censures, as their virtues and services become better known.

Some of my ancestors came over to this country, from England, soon after the settlement of America; but, being "few in number, and strangers in the land," they suffered severely from their Puritanical predecessors, who, in destroying them, "thought they did God service." Those who came out some

years after, under the patronage of the "Society for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts," met with somewhat better success; but they also had many powerful and bigoted enemies, who regarded them as mere formalists in religion, and as no better than Popish refugees. They formed, it is true, a distinct class of worshippers, adhering to their ancient usages, and not choosing to forsake "the old paths," wherein their forefathers had walked, for every new and eccentric by-way. The consequence was, although they were disposed to be quiet and peaceable, and not to interfere "in other men's matters," yet their strange forms and ceremonies were ridiculed, and they themselves were "every where spoken against." Such was the hostility to the festivals and holy days which my ancestors had observed from time immemorial, that in one of the New England states it was enacted, that "whosoever should be found observing

any such day as Christmas and the like, either by forbearing labour, feasting, or any other way, upon such an account as aforesaid, every such person, so offending, should pay for every such offence, five shillings as a fine to the county.”*

When the disturbances between this country and England broke out, my ancestors, who happened to be of English origin, suffered more than ever from the persecuting spirit of their enemies. Their religion being the same with that of the national Church of England, it was absurdly argued that their attachment must extend to the English government and laws. Intelligent and truly pious men saw, indeed, that the connexion of my family with the Church of England was purely accidental, and that they might, notwithstanding such connexion, zealously espouse the American

* Law of Massachusetts in 1651.

cause, and resolutely resist British oppression and wrong. Indeed, one of the best friends my ancestors ever had in this country, and one who always spoke of them with reverence and esteem, was himself the leader of the American armies—the virtuous, the high-minded, the immortal Washington. He had been brought up in the Episcopal Church, and was a constant and devout attendant upon her services. The common people, however, were incapable of discriminating between rational formularies of devotion, and the mass-book of the Romish Church; or between an innocent conformity to the religious usages of England, and an approval of the part she was taking in relation to her colonies. My forefathers, therefore, were indiscriminately branded as “tories,” and were either obliged to lie concealed, or flee the country. Most of them went back to England. Some few remained; and were it not foreign from my present pur-

pose, I could relate many amusing anecdotes of the abuse and violence poured upon them, during the stormy period of the revolution. I say amusing, for at this late day such stories would wear the air of fiction; and are only calculated to excite a smile, although the consequences were serious enough at the time.

Peace with the mother country brought some respite to the persecutions with which my ancestors had been assailed; many of those who had fled during the troubles, returned again to America, with a reasonable prospect of sitting down quietly to worship God, as the Apostles and primitive Church, and their own immediate forefathers, had worshipped Him.

It was my good fortune to come into the world about this time. My earliest recollection goes back about sixty years, when I distinctly remember being placed for sale on a bookseller's shelf, in the town of H——, in the state of Connecticut. This must have

been in the year of our LORD 1790; for I well recollect hearing a great deal said about the Convention which had met the year before, for the purpose of revising the Liturgy; and I myself am one of the revised copies of the Book of Common Prayer, set forth by that Convention.

CHAPTER II.

A Christmas Present.—Family Prayers.—Christmas Day.—Decoration of the Church.—The Sermon.—How the rest of the day was passed.

I HAD not been many weeks on the bookseller's shelf, when one very cold day, in the month of December, a well-dressed middle-aged man, with a most benevolent countenance, came into the shop and said he wished to purchase some Christmas presents for his children. My master immediately spread out upon the counter all his variety of story and picture books, from which the stranger selected several of a religious and instructive character, and then asked to look at some Pocket Bibles and Prayer Books. These were accordingly handed down, and after examining them, to see that the binding was good, and the volumes perfect in all their parts, the gen-

tleman made choice of me, and also of a neat little Pocket Bible, similarly bound, saying, as he wrapped them up, they would be a suitable Christmas gift for his little daughter; then bidding the bookseller "Good morning," he walked out of the shop.

Never shall I forget my first interview with the good gentleman's family. He had many miles to ride, and it was the evening preceding Christmas day when he reached home. The children all ran out to meet him, and the little ones were very inquisitive to know what he had brought them for their holiday presents. His wife kindly assisted him to lay off his outer coat, and then placed a chair for him by the blazing hearth. Soon they gathered around the social tea-table, as cheerful and happy a circle as ever met at the same family board. After tea the presents were unpacked and spread out before the glistening and delighted eyes of the children. There were various

kinds of toys, and for each child a book adapted to its age and understanding. One of the daughters, a little girl about eleven years old, looked somewhat disconcerted when she saw all her brothers and sisters receiving presents, and none appeared designed for herself; but her countenance brightened up when her father presented her with the Pocket Bible and Prayer Book, saying, "Here, Louisa, is the best present I can make you. These two books ought always to go together. Let them be your inseparable companions. Let the one be the rule and guide of your life, and let the other regulate your daily devotions. The one, by God's grace, which you are diligently to seek for by humble prayer, will be 'a lamp unto your feet, and a light unto your path;' it will make you wise unto salvation; the other will enable you to offer up your prayers in language pure, fervent, and scriptural, to your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; it will en-

able you to ‘pray with the spirit, and with the understanding also.’ Never, my child, neglect the use of these precious volumes, as you value my favour, the quiet of your own conscience, and the approbation of your God.”

Little Louisa’s heart was so full that she could not speak, and she only dropped a courtesy in token of her gratitude for the gift, and her determination to abide by her father’s pious counsel.

At the usual hour, the family and servants were all assembled for social worship, previous to their retiring to rest. The father read a chapter from the old family Bible, and my young mistress looked over in her new pocket volume. All then knelt down, when Mr. B——, for that was the name of this good man, read the excellent form of Family Prayer from the Liturgy, with a fervour of expression, which plainly told that his heart felt what his lips uttered. This I found was his

universal practice, both morning and evening; having long before adopted the resolution of the pious Israelite, that he and his house would serve the Lord. All the family repeated after him the Lord's prayer in an audible voice, and responded "Amen," at the end of each collect. It thus appeared that they, too, were attentive to the solemn duties in which they were engaged.

When Louisa B—— retired to her chamber for the night, she took her Bible and Prayer Book with her, and having read a chapter from the former, and repeated several collects, from the latter, in addition to her customary prayers, she went to bed and slept soundly until morning.

The next day being Christmas, the family rose early to prepare for church, which was three or four miles distant. The children were running about, as soon as the day dawned, with bright smiling faces and rosy cheeks, wishing

each other “a merry Christmas.” After family worship had been performed, and the breakfast was over, the little ones were dressed in their warm holiday suits, and the whole family set out in a sleigh for church; my young mistress taking me and my more honourable companion with her.

The church was a neat little building embosomed in a grove of trees, which in summer afforded a refreshing shade; but now, from their leafless boughs, numberless icicles hung glittering in the morning sun. The interior of the church presented a delightful contrast to the winter desolation which reigned without. It was tastefully adorned with evergreens, according to the ancient custom of embellishing churches; for the Saviour’s advent seems to be alluded to in that beautiful passage of the evangelical prophet: “The glory of Lebanon (the cedar,) shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box-tree together, to

beautify the place of my sanctuary ;”* and also in that other expression of the same prophet, “I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree ; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, and the pine-tree, and the box-tree together.”† These, and many similar passages to be met with in the prophets, led the Jews to expect the Messiah’s advent about the time of the winter solstice, or the 25th of December ; and hence arose the custom of decorating churches with evergreens on that holy day.

The services of the day were interesting and impressive ; the church was filled with worshippers : and although many, from the different denominations in the neighbourhood, were no doubt drawn there by motives of curiosity, yet all appeared attentive and devotional. When the minister read the lessons, my young mistress opened her Bible, and followed him

* Isa. lx. 13.

† Isa. xli. 19.

through them with the most careful attention. When other parts of the service were performed, she made diligent and familiar use of me; behaving throughout with the strictest propriety and decorum; uttering every response in an audible voice; kneeling when the confession and prayers were offered up, and standing when the creed, and anthems, and psalms, were read or sung.

The sermon was a plain and practical discourse, adapted to the occasion, setting forth the blessings of the Messiah's advent, the necessity of all mankind's being born anew in Christ Jesus, or vain would it be for them that he was born into the world; and exhorting to the cultivation of all those virtues and graces, which alone could make that day a day of jubilee to the Christian, and enable him, in the fervour of thankfulness, to say, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour."

After the morning services were ended, the people flocked around their beloved pastor, and there were cordial shaking of hands, and mutual congratulations for being permitted to meet on that holy day, with warm wishes for many happy returns to all of them, of the blessed festival. My mistress went with her parents and brothers and sisters, to spend the rest of the day at her grandfather's, who lived in an adjoining town; where, according to the good old custom, the whole of this patriarch's family were assembled, to the third and fourth generation. The afternoon and evening passed in rational and joyous festivity; in that delightful social intercourse which the poet Southey so beautifully describes, in the following lines, on an English Christmas holiday:—

“Brightly o’er the cheerful hall
Beams the heaped hearth, and friends and kindred meet;
And the glad mother, round her festive board,

Beholds her children, separated long
Amid the world's wide way, assembled now,
And, at the sight, affection lightens up
With smiles, the eye that age hath long bedimm'd."

Thus pleasantly passed the first day with my dear little Louisa, with whom I became more and more delighted, because she seemed to be daily more and more fond of me, as my subsequent history will show.

CHAPTER III.

Confirmation.—The Prayer Book falls into the hands of a Congregational Minister.—The use he makes of it.—Prepares to take orders in the Church.—Gives his Prayer Book to an emigrant.

LOUISA B—— had been carefully educated by her pious parents, who remembered the admonition of the wise king of Israel—"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." At that time there were no Sunday-schools established; but her parents always heard her recite a lesson on a Sunday morning, and she often afterwards repeated it to the minister of the parish, after the evening service. When I first came into her possession she knew all the Catechism, and many of the Collects by heart; and before I left her she could repeat them all, and had learned the greater part of the Epistles

and Gospels. Nor were these truths fixed in her memory only; they were evidently impressed by divine grace upon her heart, and exercised a salutary influence over her life.

I remained with her three years; during which time, by the divine blessing on parental instruction, she grew in grace, as she grew in age, and became a truly lovely and pious child. When she was little more than fourteen years of age, Bishop S—— held a confirmation in the parish, and Louisa was admitted to that sacred rite; not merely because she was old enough to say her catechism; but because, in the estimation of her pastor, who took unwearyed pains to fit the young members of his congregation for this rite, she was well prepared to renew her Baptismal engagements. Louisa had been faithfully taught, by her pious mother, how solemn was the vow which she was about to take upon herself, and exhorted to weigh the matter well, before she made this

public and deliberate consecration of herself to God. The Sunday following she came forward to the Holy Communion, and during the few months afterwards, in which I remained with her, she was ever careful to “walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith she was called.” To her parents she was always dutiful, and to her brothers and sisters uniformly gentle and kind, and amiable and humble in her deportment towards all. These lovely virtues made her always cheerful and happy, and I have often mourned the day when we parted.

Returning from Church one Sunday evening, with her Bible and Prayer Book wrapped up in her handkerchief, by some unlucky accident I slipped out, without her noticing it, and she walked on leaving me in the path. It was nearly dark when I fell from my young mistress’s hand, and I lay all night in the street. The next morning I was picked up by a vene-

rable looking man in black, who proved to be a Congregational clergyman, returning on horseback to his home in a remote part of the state. He hastily turned over my leaves, to ascertain the nature of his prize, and as he put me into his pocket and remounted his horse, I heard him say, "This is just the thing." What he meant by "just the thing," I had afterwards to learn; but considering it at the time a compliment to myself, or at least an expression of good will, I felt no solicitude as to my future treatment, although I could not but regret being thus separated from my dear young mistress, who I knew would grieve when she discovered her loss.

My new master, on his arrival at home, placed me upon his study table, and from that moment I was his daily companion. On Saturday evening, especially, he studied me with the closest attention; and I the next day understood what he meant by "just the thing,"

when I found that he delivered from the pulpit, those prayers which he learned from me. This I was pleased with, as it was an acknowledgment of my superior excellence. I afterwards learned that, although educated from childhood in the Congregational church, he “never could be thoroughly reconciled to the practice of public extempore praying and preaching, which he looked upon as the great engines of enthusiasm. When at college, he had conceived an aversion to extempore prayers, by observing the use that was made of them there, and the tendency of this practice to promote self-conceit and spiritual pride.”* While I remained with him, “he went on in the discharge of parochial duties, not appearing to vary from the customs of the country. As to his prayers, he commonly made use of forms, which he provided for himself in the

* Chandlers’s Life of Dr. Johnson, first President of King’s College, New York, p. 18.

best manner he could, and chiefly out of the Liturgy.”*

Soon after I became an inmate of his study, his reading was chiefly the works of standard Episcopal divines, especially the writers on ecclesiastical polity, and on the doctrines and ministry of the church. He soon began to entertain doubts of the validity of his ordination; and after some months of patient persevering study, with many fervent prayers for the divine guidance, he resolved to apply for orders in the Episcopal Church. It was painful, indeed, to leave the church of his fathers; the people, too, to whom he was bound by so many endearing ties, and whom he had reason to believe were devotedly attached to him, and to go an entire stranger into another fold; but duty prompted him to this course; and duty, with him was paramount to every selfish

* Chandler's Life of Dr. Johnson, p. 22.

consideration. “When Mr. J—— took leave of his people, whom he greatly loved, he affectionately told them that if they could see reason to conform to the Episcopal Church, he would never leave them; but after obtaining such ordination as he thought to be necessary, that he would return to them again in the character of their minister. But with such an offer they were unable to comply, notwithstanding their esteem for him. He expostulated with them, and urged them seriously to consider the matter. Among other things he said, that they had hitherto professed to admire his preaching, and especially his prayers. And, indeed, his prayers were so much admired by people in general, that it was common for persons belonging to the neighbouring parishes to come to his church, on purpose to hear them. Now he told them that his instructions and prayers had all along been taken from the Episcopal Church; and that they ought to be

esteemed as much, after this circumstance was known, as they had been before. This declaration greatly surprised them; however, no more than four or five of them could then be reconciled to receive him in the orders of the church. After a few days, therefore, he took his final leave of them.”* Before leaving home, to obtain Episcopal ordination, my master presented me to a friend of his, a churchman, who was about removing with his family into the western part of the state of New York. My new master, a pious man, zealously attached to the church of his ancestors, and regarding me, next to his Bible, as his richest treasure, shortly afterwards emigrated to those then western wilds, taking me with several of my companions along with him. As this is a most important period of my history, I may be permitted to dwell more minutely upon it.

* Chandler's Life of Dr. Johnson, p. 32.

CHAPTER IV.

The Prayer Book travels to Western New York.—An Emigrant's Life.—A Union Church.—Lay Reading.

It was a bright sunny morning in spring, when my master, Mr. M——, with his family, reached the spot where he intended settling, and where he expected to spend the remainder of his days. The trees had just put forth their leaves, and stood arrayed in their richest green; the squirrel leaped from branch to branch, as if delighted with his liberty; the red-breast, on the topmast bough of some lofty elm, poured forth his sweet and mellow notes; all around the woods seemed instinct with life, and universal nature appeared to rejoice and sing. Yet, notwithstanding this gay and lively scene which surrounded them, I thought my master and mistress looked sad, though they strove to cheer each other with the prospect

of future happiness. And well might they feel sorrowful; for they had been compelled by pecuniary losses to leave the home of their infancy, with all its cherished endearments, their relatives and friends, the joys of social intercourse, which constituted the chief charm of life, the church in which they had been baptized and nurtured, and where they had often partaken of the bread of life; these, together with those thousand comforts and advantages to be found in most of our New England towns, they had left behind, to go into a wilderness of woods, where there were no friends to cheer them in the loneliness of their dreary solitude, and where the “sound of the church-going bell” was never heard.

The place to which Mr. M—— came was a tract of new land, purchased in better days, but was now all that remained to him of a once ample fortune. A small house, built of logs, had been put up previous to his arrival;

and here he hoped, by patient and persevering industry, if his health was spared, to provide a competency for his family. He foresaw that it required many painful sacrifices, and much habitual self-denial, to fix himself down on such a spot for life; yet he had “learned,” with the Apostle, “in whatsoever state he was, therewith to be content.”

I shall pass rapidly over the first few years of their residence in this place. Their time was occupied during the day, as that of all new settlers usually is, my master cutting down the trees, and clearing and cultivating the land; my mistress attending to the domestic duties within doors, like the “virtuous woman” commended by Solomon, “seeking wool and flax, and working willingly with her hands,” and “looking well to the ways of her household.”* In the evening Mr. M——

* Prov. xxxi. 13, 27.

read some instructive book aloud, or heard the lessons of the children, who, having no school to attend, were educated, as well as circumstances would permit, under the immediate tuition of their parents. Every morning and evening the whole family were assembled for domestic worship; when my master usually read a chapter in the Bible, and then the form of prayer for families, or some of the collects; for he considered it the duty of every Christian, to begin each day with prayer to Almighty God for his blessing and protection through the day, and to end it with thanksgiving for mercies received, and supplications for guardianship, through the dangers of the night, by Him who "neither slumbers nor sleeps." On Sundays, he always read the regular morning and evening prayers, together with the appointed lessons, and a sermon; the rest of the day was given to self-examination and private devotion, to innocent and cheerful

conversation, and to the religious instruction of his family.

Thus passed the first few years of their residence in this new country ; yet each season saw great changes and improvements making around them. Several families of emigrants moved in, and these were followed by others, in rapid succession, so that in three or four years there was quite a hamlet ; and a small public building had been erected, which served as school-house and church, and was always occupied for the latter purpose, whenever a missionary of any denomination happened to travel that way. During this period, my master, who was a man of exemplary piety, was often sent for to pray by the bed-side of the sick and dying, and sometimes to read the burial service over the graves of the departed ; on which occasions I was always his companion.

When my master had been about five years

in this new situation, the place put on quite the appearance of a flourishing village. He had exchanged his log house for one of more comfortable dimensions, and of a more respectable exterior, and all his worldly affairs seemed to be going on as prosperously as he could wish.

But there was one subject, which weighed heavily upon his mind, and which was the almost constant theme of conversation with his wife when they were alone; it was the church of his fathers. How to get it planted in that western land was now his greatest solicitude. Often have I seen the big tear roll down his cheek, while talking with his family of those blissful days, when they could go “to the house of God in company;” and then as he contrasted those blessed privileges which they once enjoyed, with their present destitution of the sacred ordinances, he would exclaim, in the fervent language of the Psalmist,

“O how amiable are thy dwellings, thou Lord of Hosts!—My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord.” “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; yea, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.”

For five long years he had not seen an Episcopal clergyman; and his views of the sacred office would not permit him to receive the communion from persons not Episcopally ordained; although he had great respect for their piety and zeal, and often-times derived much benefit from their religious instruction. Frequently, when a Methodist, or Presbyterian, or Baptist minister had preached in the village school-house, he had been to hear him; but to stand and hear a prayer was not, to him, like praying from the Liturgy; and he always came home, more anxious than ever to introduce among his neighbours that pure, scriptural and rational formulary, to which

he had been accustomed from earliest childhood.

He saw that other denominations were rapidly gaining ground, while nothing had been done for that of his own. Already a subscription was in circulation for building a "Union" Church, as it is called, to accommodate all sects; but when it was presented to Mr. M—, he declined giving any thing, candidly saying that he did not approve of this amalgamating system, which, however pure the motives of those with whom the plan originated, far from producing quietness, peace, and love, among all Christian people, too often ended in "confusion and every evil work." He said he had often seen the experiment tried, but had never known it to succeed well; and that, for his part, he would much rather each denomination would build a house of worship for themselves, though it were of logs, than to unite in erecting the most costly edifice, and afterwards dis-

pute about the right of occupancy. He further told them, that in the present instance he must decline subscribing to their "Union" Church on another ground. Although he could bid "God speed" to every proper effort to extend the kingdom of the Redeemer, yet his conscientious preference was for the Episcopal Church, and he must reserve all his means to introduce and sustain that, which he hoped soon to see established there. I was with my master at this time, for he generally carried me in his pocket, and I listened with pleasure to these remarks because they so exactly met my own views. Although he was accused of maintaining narrow notions, and of being destitute of that liberality which it is so much the fashion of the present age to extol, he paid no attention to these reproaches, but continued inflexible to his purpose. The same evening I saw he looked more thoughtful than usual, and when the family had retired to rest I heard

him say to Mrs. M——, whom he always consulted in cases of difficulty, “Harriet, my dear, they are about building a meeting-house in town for the accommodation of all denominations, and I have declined contributing, as I have no doubt it will cause serious disturbances in our little village. I should like to see each denomination of Christians have a house of worship of its own; for I believe charity would thereby be best preserved, and pure religion best promoted. As far as my experience goes, there is always most harmony and Christian love, when those who differ in religious opinions keep perfectly distinct; and each sect manages its own religious affairs in its own way. We are too few and too poor to erect a building for ourselves. But I have a plan in my head, which I hope you will approve. I will have a church in my own house. There are now several Episcopal families within a few miles of us, and one or two in the village,

all of whom will gladly unite with us; and we will meet every Sunday, when I will read the service and a sermon. That large unfinished room up stairs will probably hold more persons than we can ever collect. But who can tell what good may grow out of this small beginning, with the divine blessing upon our efforts? It will not, I know, be so pleasant to meet in this way, as to have a church and minister, such as we left in New England; but we can plead the example of those primitive Christians who assembled 'in an upper room, where prayer was wont to be made.' And we have, moreover, the blessed promise of our Redeemer, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' **

Mrs. M—— was delighted with the plan; and the next morning my master mounted his

* Matt. xviii. 20.

horse, and rode round to see the few families of church people in his neighbourhood, all of whom expressed pleasure at his proposals, and agreed to meet at his house every Sunday, when circumstances would permit.

CHAPTER V.

Lay Reading continued.—Religious Dissensions among the various Sects.—Accessions to the Church.

SUNDAY came—a bright cloudless day in autumn—and at the appointed hour the few Episcopalians, who had been apprized of the arrangement, “were with one accord in one place.” About twenty persons, besides my master’s family, assembled in the large “upper room,” bringing their Prayer Books with them and uniting in the service with the greatest apparent devotion. Mr. M—— read the morning prayers, together with the lessons and a sermon; he however omitted the absolution and benediction, which he rightly thought none but a clergyman was authorized to pronounce. After an intermission of an hour they again met, and the evening service and a sermon were read; the little flock then sepa-

rated, much pleased and profited with the exercises of the day. This practice continued many months without interruption; the same little company being gathered together, and now and then some of their more liberal-minded neighbours would join them. In the mean time the meeting-house was finished and occupied every Sunday alternately, by each of the different sects who had united in building it. Nothing happened to disturb the harmony of the village during the first year. Those who met at my master's house on a Sunday, were looked upon as rather cold formalists in religion; but as no persons were more exemplary in their lives, more honest and upright in their dealings, more kind and charitable to the poor, or more ready and cheerful in discharging all the social duties, they were suffered to go on quietly worshipping God in their own way. But at the commencement of the second year disputes arose respecting the meeting-house;

the various parties could not agree about the arrangement of their services, each party prosecuted its own claims with intemperate warmth; the bitterness of controversy extended into the social circle, separated families, and alienated the hearts of friends; but the result was, as might have been foreseen, the majority ruled, and the strongest party took the whole.

He who knoweth how to “bring good out of evil,” overruled these events so as to increase and strengthen that little band of faithful worshippers, who, amidst the turmoils and commotions around them, still pursued the even tenor of their way. Many of the most reflecting, sober-minded, and pious men quietly withdrew, and joined the little company at Mr. M——’s house. At first they disliked the forms, so new and strange to them; but any thing seemed preferable to that scene of confusion and misrule which they had just left. They confessed that in the language of the

liturgy they could find nothing objectionable, for it was mostly composed in the very words of Scripture; and the church, little as they knew of it, came strongly recommended by its uniformly steady, but unostentatious course, and the exemplary lives of those who were attached to her communion. They saw in it an ark of security and rest, “a city at unity in itself,” where they could enter in and be safe from the troubles and dissensions, which, to the great grief of every pious mind, were destroying and rending asunder their own denominations. But they were sensible men, unwilling to take any thing upon trust, much less would they support any religious institutions, which were not clearly sanctioned by the word of God. Knowing that the Episcopal Church laid high claims to an apostolic ministry, and to apostolic usages, they set themselves to examine the justness of her pretensions; and, like the “noble” Bereans, they “searched the

Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." They came to the investigation with honest intentions, and minds open to conviction; and the result of their inquiries was, a firm conviction that the church was scriptural in her doctrines, apostolic in her ministry, and pure and primitive in her worship. They then yielded all their powers, and put forth all their efforts, to maintain and defend her cause. The acquisition of such men was a matter of much joy to my dear master, and the more gratifying, because so unexpected; neither he nor his associates ever having made undue exertions to gain proselytes. "He blessed God, and took courage," from this accession to their strength. He now hoped, at no distant day, to see the church of his fathers firmly planted in that place, "taking root downward, and bearing fruit upwards," and spreading forth boughs like a goodly tree, with "leaves for the healing of the nations."

CHAPTER VI.

Arrival of an Episcopal Minister.—Father N——, the Missionary.—Divine Service.—Baptism.—The Sermon.—Holy Communion.

ABOUT the time that the church began to assume a more flourishing appearance, as related in the last chapter, an event occurred which seemed to infuse new life into its members and gave additional impulse to their efforts. This was the arrival of an Episcopal minister, the first who had ever visited that part of the country. The Rev. Mr. N——, with the true spirit of a gospel missionary, had gone forth from his native state “to seek Christ’s sheep which were scattered abroad;” with a determination, as he said, not to “build on another man’s foundation;” and Providence directed his steps to “the waste places” in our western land. He was then in the prime of life, meek,

63

humble and pious ; possessing all the most important requisites for a useful missionary of the cross, in our new settlements. Wherever he came it might be truly said, “ the wilderness and solitary places were glad for him,” for he was a faithful labourer in his Master’s vineyard. His active and useful life was prolonged, and he lived to behold the blessed fruits of his patient and persevering toil. The “ bread which he cast upon the waters was found after many days ;” the seed which he sowed with industry and care, blessed by divine grace, yielded an abundant harvest ; he even lived to see “ a little one become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation.” His age, his piety, his zeal, and above all his untiring devotion to the missionary cause, for almost forty years, gained for him the well-earned title of “ the venerable father N——.” This faithful herald of the cross has now gone to his reward. His character and services are

thus graphically portrayed by the Bishop of New York, in his annual address to his diocese. “The venerable Daniel Nash, for nearly forty years a faithful missionary in the counties of Otsego and Chenango, was about four months since, (1836,) taken to his rest. He received deacon’s orders from the first bishop of this diocese, and went immediately to the extensive field of labour in which with a perseverance and fidelity, wherein he set to his young brethren a most worthy example, he continued to the last. The face of the country, the state of society, the congregations which he served, all underwent great changes; but still the good man was there, faithful to his post, true to his obligations, and eminently useful in his labours. The young loved him, the mature confided in him, the aged sought in his counsels and example, right guidance in the short remainder of their pilgrimage. Parish after parish was built up on foundations

laid by him. Younger brethren came in to relieve him of the more immediate charge; but still the good old man was there, labouring to the last among them; and long after physical ability forbade very frequent public ministrations, he would go from house to house, gathering the inmates around the domestic altar; giving great heed to that important branch of pastoral duty, which he always loved, and in which he was eminently successful, catechising the children; and having some word of warning, encouragement, reproof, consolation, or edification, as each had need. It was so ordered in the course of Providence, that I was, soon after his decease, in the district of country which had so long been the scene of his faithful labours; and truly gratified was I to witness that best of testimonies to the virtues of the man, the Christian, and the pastor, which was found in the full hearts and the tender and venerated ex-

pressions of the multitudes who, to use the affectionate epithet with which, for years, they had delighted to know him, had been bereft of good old father Nash.”*

* An affectionate tribute was recently paid to the memory of this good man, by the congregation of which he first had the pastoral care ; as the following notice from a Church periodical will show :—

“FATHER NASH.—This venerable minister of God was not gathered unto his people at the time of his death, owing to some circumstances beyond the control of his friends ; though it was his often-expressed wish, before he died, that his remains might moulder among those to whom he had ministered in life, and with those generations to whose families he had offered the rites and consolations of the church. This strong desire of their beloved minister was borne in mind by the members of the different churches in the county, and on Wednesday, the 31st ult. (Oct. 1838,) his remains, together with those of his wife and an infant child, were transported with devout solemnity, to the burial-ground of Christ Church, Coopers-town, Otsego county, New York, and re-interred under a beautiful pine, in one grave. It is the intention of the Episcopalians of the county, to place a tablet inscribed

But to return to my story; when Mr. N—— visited us, there was a general rejoicing among the Episcopalians, and preparations were immediately made for his preaching and administering the sacraments on the following day, which was Sunday. As the room in which they had usually met, at my master's house, was barely large enough to accommodate those who worshipped there, and was rather inconvenient on other accounts, it was thought best to procure the school-house on this occasion.

Long before the hour appointed for divine service, the little building was crowded, and numbers went away for want of room. Some of these were doubtless attracted by mere curiosity to see the performance of religious ceremonies in a manner so new and strange; to 'FATHER NASH,' in the church of which he was the first rector, and to raise a decent monument over his grave."

but I have reason to believe that many who came with strong prejudices against the Church, returned home favourably impressed with the beauty and solemnity of her excellent formularies. The whole scene, to those more immediately interested in them, was exceedingly affecting. Many shed tears of joy; and I heard one venerable old man say, as he pressed the hand of the clergyman when coming out of the house, that this was the happiest day of his life. To me the services never appeared half so interesting. The minister read the prayers in a clear, distinct, and impressive tone of voice, and with great seriousness of manner, as if he felt all that he uttered. When the responses were made, they seemed the fervent and pious ejaculations of Christian hearts, audibly poured forth as from one mouth.

At the close of the second lesson, several parents came forward with their little ones, to present them for the holy ordinance of Bap-

tism ; and it was a moving sight to behold the authorized “ambassador of Christ” taking these young lambs of the flock, and after the example of his Divine Master, “embracing them in his arms, laying his hands upon them and blessing them,” and “baptizing them in the adorable name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ;” and then signing them with the blessed sign of the Cross, as a token of their being “faithful soldiers and servants,” who should never be afraid nor ashamed, to “fight manfully under the banner” of the Great Captain of their salvation. The solemn charge which he addressed to the sponsors, must have thrilled through their hearts. I looked around to see what effect this part of the service had on those persons who had never before witnessed it, and I thought I saw a tear steal down the cheeks of several who stood near me ; probably at the recollection of their own baptismal en-

gagements, and of the time when their pious parents brought them, in unconscious infancy, to the sacred font. Nor was it strange that they should weep at the remembrance of their own violated vows, when the minister pronounced those closing words; “Ye are to take care that these children be virtuously brought up, to lead a godly and a Christian life; remembering always that Baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto Him; that as he died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living.”

The sermon was excellently well suited to the time and place; it was from those comforting words of our Saviour, “Fear not, little

flock.”* The preacher spoke of the many discouragements and difficulties which must always attend the introduction of a new manner of worship, so unlike as theirs was, to that of any of the sects around them. The prepossessions of men in favour of their own opinions, especially in matters of religion, he told them, were deep-rooted and strong; and when erroneous, it required patient and persevering industry, aided by much mildness and prudence to overcome them. “Other denominations,” he continued, “are accustomed to extempore prayer, and many of them think it sinful to pray by a book. They have been taught, too, to regard Episcopalians as mere formalists. Let us pity their prejudices, and endeavour to remove them, in the spirit of Christian charity; not forgetting that, although we differ on some essential points of doctrine

* Luke xii. 32.

and worship, yet we are all brethren in Christ Jesus; and we should treat them with courtesy and kindness, as those whom we hope to meet one day in that temple above, where all shall worship Jehovah with one heart and one mouth. Remember that the most effectual method of recommending and enforcing one's own peculiar views, is by holy example. Let the fruits of your religion be seen in your lives, and they will weigh more than volumes of argument. A blameless life will always silence gainsayers; and by degrees they will acknowledge that that form of worship cannot be so odious as they at first thought, when its fruits are altogether lovely. It was," he continued, "the advice of an inspired Apostle to some of the first Christian converts, and well worthy our serious attention, 'Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you;' but let it be with 'meekness' and candour, not in the

spirit of bitterness and reproach. And you will ever bear in mind what the same Apostle adds: 'Whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.'* If we are blest with more or better privileges than some other Christians, we are bound to excel them as much in all virtue and godliness of living."

After many such pious admonitions, and earnest exhortations to cultivate holiness of heart and life, and to "follow peace with all men," he encouraged them to persevere in their laudable endeavours to establish a church of their own, by showing how the greatest success had, in numerous instances, attended beginnings as small as these, and therefore we ought not to "despise the day of small things." "Indeed, the time was," he said, "when few,

* 1 Pet. iii. 16.

very few—only twelve—constituted the whole Christian Church; and it was to them the Divine founder of our religion addressed those cheering words of our text, ‘Fear not, little flock.’ And even after his resurrection and ascension, the disciples were still so few in number, that ‘they were all with one accord in one place,’* and that probably, a small room in some private house. Yet from this small beginning, ‘so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed,’ that in a very short time the whole world was filled with Christ’s doctrine. This ‘grain of mustard seed,’ grew to be a mighty tree, and spread its branches far and wide. Doubt not, therefore,” was his concluding exhortation, “that God favourably receiveth this work of yours, and will bestow upon it his blessing. Be careful to build only on that ‘sure foundation,’ the Rock of Ages,

* Acts ii. 1.

‘Jesus Christ, and him crucified;’ for ‘other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.’ ”*

Immediately after the sermon, the holy communion was administered. Eight or ten persons, some of whom had not enjoyed this privilege for many long years, “drew near in faith,” as I trust, and took “that holy sacrament to their comfort.” It was to them like being fed with manna in the wilderness. Some of them could not refrain from sobbing aloud, when they received the bread and wine, the precious pledges of a dying Saviour’s love. It brought back a tide of pleasing and painful recollections of times when they used to kneel, in former years, with loved friends, around the holy altar; and it carried forward their thoughts to the time when, through the infinite mercies of their Redeemer, they hoped to sit

* 1 Cor. iii. 11.

down with the same beloved friends, at the marriage supper of the Lamb. As these thoughts came over them with a mixture of sadness and of joy, their full hearts gushed forth in tears. Oh, it is luxury to weep, when the scenes of departed years, with ten thousand bright and glowing pictures of social love and domestic happiness, sweep across the memory, and we seem to be again surrounded

“By those fair forms, alas ! now seen no more ;
Lov’d, and still lov’d ; not dead, but gone before !”

CHAPTER VII.

Church built.—Visit of another Missionary, the Rev. D. Phelps.—His character.—Church consecrated.—Confirmation.

THE Rev. Mr. N—— remained at my master's house several days, and all that time was diligently employed in making preparations for organizing a church, and in ascertaining how much money could be obtained towards erecting a suitable house of worship. Providence smiled upon their endeavours, and disposed the hearts of the few Episcopalians to give liberally, each one in proportion to the means with which God had blessed him. The subscription soon amounted to several hundred dollars; which, together with some promised assistance from the city of New York, enabled them to commence their building the following spring. All things went on prosperously,

and with great harmony; men's hands were strengthened for the work; in less than one year after "the foundations of the house were laid," the superstructure was completed and ready for consecration. It was a neat and commodious edifice, built with the strictest economy, but with every convenience about the altar, desk, and pews, so that in the public worship of Jehovah, "all things might be done decently and in order." When finished, those who were concerned in building it, had the satisfaction of knowing that it was all paid for; there was no burdensome debt pressing upon them, and paralyzing all further exertions. In due time, they hoped to procure a bell and organ; but they were content to do without these for a few years, that they might be better enabled to contribute towards the support of a minister.

While the new church was in progress, our little congregation were again cheered and en-

couraged by a visit from another devoted missionary, the Rev. Davenport Phelps; a man whose name cannot be pronounced but with the sincerest respect and affection. He, too, like the venerable father N——, had travelled through the western land, with the self-denying spirit of a primitive missionary; “planting churches wherever he came.” In two or three years after his visit to our village, this good man was called to receive the reward promised to those “who turn many to righteousness.” He died at Geneva, June 27, 1813; and I cannot refrain from quoting the just tribute of respect paid to his memory by his beloved Diocesan, at the next annual convention after Mr. P.’s death. “In noticing the changes in the diocese, you have doubtless already anticipated me, in the painful remark, that we no longer perceive in his place in this convention our venerable brother, the Rev. Davenport Phelps. He has gone to his rest. For many

years he has been employed as a missionary in the western parts of the state. Having visited the extensive district in which he officiated, I am able to bear testimony to the high estimation in which he was held for his pious and exemplary character, and for the fidelity and prudent zeal with which he discharged his arduous and laborious duties. He is justly revered as the founder of the congregations in the most western counties of the state, whom he attached, not merely to his personal ministrations, but to the doctrine, the ministry, and liturgy of our church. Indeed it was highly gratifying to me to observe, in the congregations where he officiated, and in others in the infant settlements of the state, which are still cherished by ministers equally faithful, the devotion and the decency with which the people performed their part of the public service. It is an evidence that whatever prejudices our liturgy may have at first to encounter among

those who are unacquainted with it, a minister who will be diligent in explaining it, and enforcing its excellencies, and who, in obedience to his ordination vows, will be faithful and devout in the use of it, will finally succeed, by the divine blessing, in leading many to value it as their best help in the exercises of devotion, and next to the Bible, their best guide to heaven.”

Some months before the church was finished, the congregation were blessed by the faithful ministrations of a pious young clergyman, in deacon's orders, who divided his time equally between four parishes, fifteen or twenty miles apart. Unfrequent as were his services in our village, they were a great help in the infancy of our undertaking. But as soon as the building was completed, and it was understood that the Bishop would come on in a few weeks and consecrate it, and administer confirmation at the same time, Mr. R., the missionary, thought

it his duty to bestow more than ordinary attention on this part of his charge. He accordingly came to board with my master, that he might give the necessary instructions to the young, to prepare them for the holy rite of confirmation; and, by a course of lectures on the duties and privileges of the Baptismal covenant, might enlighten those who had not been educated in the church, and knew little or nothing of its forms and ordinances.

The wished-for day at length arrived; and a bright and happy day it was. Multitudes flocked in from the neighbouring towns, to witness the ceremonies. Our little church was full to overflowing. The Bishop, a venerable man of more than three score years, was received at the entrance of the church by the churchwardens and vestrymen; and as they proceeded up the aisle, they repeated, alternately, the twenty-fourth Psalm, as appointed in that most excellent and appropriate "Form of Consecration

of a Church," prescribed in the liturgy. Never can I forget the appearance of that venerable and holy man, while performing the various and interesting services of the day. About twenty young persons, and eight or ten of an advanced age, presented themselves for confirmation. Every person in the house evinced an absorbing interest in this solemn ceremony. There, around the holy altar, stood some of the brightest and loveliest of our village circle, in all the buoyancy of youth and health, ready to assume the vows of Baptism, and to devote themselves anew to their God and Saviour. It was a joyful sight to behold these young disciples consecrating the best of their days, the first fruits of their years, to Him whose "service is perfect freedom." And many a tear glistened in the parent's eye, as he saw his children bending before the aged Bishop, and beheld the man of God lay his hands upon the head of his beloved ones, and heard him

invoke the choicest of heaven's blessings, in those impressive words, "Defend, O Lord, these thy servants, with thy heavenly grace; that they may continue thine for ever, and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until they come unto thy everlasting kingdom." I have witnessed many such scenes since, but those first impressions are never to be effaced. To see a church, under every possible difficulty and discouragement, planted in the wilderness, taking root, and springing up and flourishing; to behold a neat and commodious edifice, with its spire pointing towards heaven, consecrated on the spot where, a few years before, no traces of civilization could be found, and where mighty forest trees had for centuries spread their giant arms to the sky; to see the sacred ordinances administered, and to hear the glad tidings of salvation proclaimed in that church for the first time; these are scenes affecting beyond description

to a pious mind. None but those who have witnessed them can have any idea of their interest, and all who have seen them will agree with me, that they are more easily felt than expressed.

Bishop M—— left us the next morning, having engagements to fulfil in other parts of his extensive diocese. My master appeared perfectly happy, having accomplished the object which had long been nearest and dearest to his heart; and when he retired to rest that night, I heard him repeat aloud—"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."

CHAPTER VIII.

Visit of the Rev. Mr. P——. His kindness to Children.

The Prayer Book resumes its travels with him.—Joy at Mr. P——'s return.—Description of his residence.—He visits his parishioners.—Their affection for him.

A FEW weeks after the consecration of our little church, I was separated from my beloved master, and I have never had the happiness of seeing him again. One Saturday evening a clergyman came to his house, and remained with him over Sunday. This gentleman had been settled several years in the southern part of Ohio, and was now on his return to his family and parish. My master's family were all delighted with him; and the children, especially, were soon won by his affectionate and cheerful manners. There was a playfulness in his conversation with them, and an engaging smile on his lips, well suited to the

simplicity and purity of infant minds, and which never fail to attract their attention. He had not been many hours in the house, before each child brought out its store of books and pictures to show to the kind-hearted man, and all were anxious to inform him where they read, and how much they could repeat of the catechism, with various other acquirements for which children are pleased to be noticed. The stranger listened to their innocent prattle, asked them many questions about their studies, heard them repeat the creed and Lord's prayer, and seemed highly gratified with their confidence and affection, so artlessly expressed, and which his own affability and kindness had drawn forth.

Children are good physiognomists ; they can discern at a glance, where their little attentions are likely to be well received, and their young hearts are easily won by an approving look or a kindly smile. If a minister would gain the

love and esteem of his parishioners, he cannot do it more easily and effectually than by kindness and attention to their little ones ; and by evincing at all times, especially in his parochial visits, his deep interest in the welfare and good conduct of these lambs of his flock. These reflections are the result of much observation of men and manners, and an intimate knowledge of those ties which so closely connect the family circle.

On Sunday morning, our new guest, who was to officiate during the day, asked for a prayer book, that he might examine the lessons ; saying, that he had unfortunately left his at the house where he had last lodged. My master handed me to him, and begged he would accept me as a present ; being, as he observed, of a convenient form and size for carrying on a journey. He received me with many grateful acknowledgments ; and, much as I regretted leaving my old master, I could

not but congratulate myself for having fallen into such excellent hands. I had now a prospect of seeing much more of the world, and of becoming more thoroughly acquainted with human nature in all its varieties; nor have my observations, I trust, been without profit to myself; happy shall I be, if I can make them equally beneficial to others.

My new master, the Rev. Mr. P——, proceeded on his journey westward, on Monday morning, taking me with him. He occasionally stopped a part of a day and preached, wherever he found a vacant congregation, or a few scattered Episcopalians, disposed to hear him. On Sunday he always contrived to rest in some village, where his services would be acceptable and useful. Thus he journeyed leisurely along, and it was not until two or three weeks after I came into his possession, that we reached his place of residence. His wife, and two bright and blooming children, a

boy and girl, met him at the door with their warm embraces, and assured him that all was well. Great was their joy at beholding him again in health and safety, after so long a separation; and that same night many fervent thanksgivings ascended from their grateful hearts, that parents and children had been again permitted to meet around the family altar, and that all their lives had been crowned with such distinguished mercies.

The news of his return soon spread through the village, and many of his parishioners hastened to welcome back their beloved pastor, and to inquire after his welfare. During his absence the church had been kept open every Sunday; some one of the most respected and pious of the laymen of his congregation reading the service and a sermon, and thus preventing the people from wandering to strange places of worship, as sheep without a shepherd.

My master's house was delightfully situated, a little out from the village, on the banks of a small river, which flowed into the Ohio, and not far from its mouth. It was an humble dwelling, with a neat little court-yard in front, filled with many flowering shrubs, which grew luxuriantly in that mild climate. Jessamines and roses bloomed beneath the windows, and the graceful passion-flower threw its slender tendrils along the walls. The monthly flowering honeysuckle crept up the pillars of a light piazza, and, when the dews of evening fell, perfumed the air with the delicious fragrance of its blossoms. Two or three lofty tulip trees, with as many spreading maples, contributed greatly to the beauty and comfort of the place. When the eye rested on that neat little white cottage, imbosomed in trees and shrubbery, it seemed a favorite spot for holy contemplation, and peacefulness, and rest. Every beholder must have felt a sacred

calm steal over him, as he gazed upon the tranquil scene. On the opposite side of the street stood the church, with its neat and well ordered grave-yard, surrounded by forest trees; and here and there a rose-bush, planted by the hand of affection, might be seen blossoming on some grassy mound, a significant emblem of that beauty which fadeth like the flower of the field.

The distant scenery was strikingly interesting. The mighty Ohio could be seen as it rolled along to meet the mightier Mississippi, and to mingle its waters with the ocean. Far off in the distance rose the high hills of Kentucky, and to the east of these, but much more distant, you could discern some of the loftiest peaks of the Alleghanies, resting like clouds on the verge of the horizon.

The day after Mr. P——'s return, he visited many of his people; calling first on the sick, the afflicted, and the infirm, and administering

consolation as their respective cases required. It was a gratifying sight to witness the affection and respect with which he was everywhere received. The dull and heavy eye and pallid countenance of disease brightened up at his approach; for at the bedside of the sick and dying he always appeared as a comforter and guide of souls. In the true spirit of his Divine Master, it was his delight to discourse of the priceless riches of redeeming love, and to direct the thoughts from the vain and perishable pleasures of earth, to that "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." In the dwellings of poverty he was always a welcome visiter; for he had been emphatically "a father to the poor." In affliction of every kind, none knew better than he how to give comfort and joy, by a proper application of the scriptural promises to those who mourn and are weary and heavy laden. While he endeavoured, by every

means in his power, to promote the spiritual welfare of his flock, he was not unmindful of their temporal wants; following, at an humble distance, the blessed steps of Him who “went about doing good” to the bodies and souls of men. The poor came to him for aid in distress, for his hand and heart were always open; the mourner came to him to be comforted, for there was a mildness and affectionate interest in his manner, soothing to the suffering heart; and the young and inexperienced sought his counsel and advice, which he was ever ready to give with parental kindness. To him might be applied those beautiful expressions of Job, “When the ear heard him, then it blessed him; and when the eye saw him, it gave witness to him; because he delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing

of him that was ready to perish came upon him; and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.”*

* Job xxix. 11—13.

CHAPTER IX.

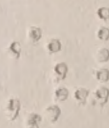
Character of Mr. P——. Importance of parochial visitation.—Sunday-school instruction.—Qualifications of Teachers.—Public Catechising.

FEW clergymen possessed a happier faculty of making their conversation agreeable and instructive, to all ages and ranks of people, than Mr. P——. He knew how to be cheerful without levity, grave without austerity, dignified without haughtiness, and humble without servility. Like his Divine Master, he could retire from the world for the purpose of devotion, and return to its active and social duties, without being seduced by its temptations and snares. He could “rejoice with those who rejoice,” as Christ himself did at the marriage in Cana; “and weep with those who weep,” as our blessed Lord did over the grave of Lazarus. It was this happy union

of the loveliest Christian graces, which rendered his company at all times acceptable to the young and aged, the sorrowful and the rejoicing. His parishioners all looked upon him as their best counsellor and friend, and loved him with almost filial affection.

He felt the responsibilities of his ministerial office, and laboured faithfully, in season and out of season, “to bring all such as were committed to his charge, unto that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, and to that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be no place left among them either for error in religion, or for viciousness of life.”* And to this end he took care, in conformity with his vows of ordination, “to use both public and private monitions and exhortations, as well to the sick as to the whole within his cure, as need should require and

* Ordination Service.



occasion should be given.” While he felt it his highest duty and his noblest privilege to proclaim the doctrines of the cross from the pulpit, on the Lord’s day, and to hold up Jesus Christ, and him crucified, as the only refuge for dying sinners, he also felt, that the impressions which were made by his preaching on Sunday, must be followed up by teaching from house to house during the week.

The importance of parochial visits cannot be too strongly urged upon the ministers of our communion. No church can prosper, unless the pastor is acquainted with his whole flock; and to know them well, he must visit them frequently at their homes. I have been in many parishes, but I never found one in a flourishing condition where this duty had been long neglected. A minister may possess all the eloquence of a Paul, but the work of the ministry can never prosper in his hands, unless, after the example of that great apostle, he

teach both “publicly, and from house to house;” nor even then, unless he daily prays for that blessing from above, without which Paul may plant and Apollos water in vain.

Next to public preaching, and visiting his parishioners, my master thought it the most important of a clergyman’s duties to attend to the catechetical instruction of the young; he had, therefore, as an aid to the fulfilment of this duty, established a Sunday-school, which was entirely under his control, and over which he maintained a watchful care. He was frequently with the school one part of the day, that he might become well acquainted with both teachers and scholars; yet the duties of Sunday were such, that he was obliged to commit the immediate supervision of the school to competent laymen. The most intelligent and pious members of his congregation, who were best qualified by age and experience to govern and instruct the young, gladly lent

their assistance ; and the good effects of their efforts were soon to be seen, in the attention and orderly conduct of the pupils, their respect for their teachers, their love for each other, and the rapid progress which they made in their studies. Many of them, we trust, attained to that “knowledge which maketh wise unto salvation.”

Mr. P—— was very solicitous that the teachers in his school should possess the requisite qualifications for their high vocation ; above all, that they should be truly pious. He well knew there were many in his parish, of a proper age, and character, and talents, for filling the useful and responsible, yet humble office of Sunday-school teachers ; and on these he earnestly pressed the importance of coming forward to the discharge of this their bounden duty, “not of constraint, but willingly.” “Let them consent,” he said, “to give a few hours on the Lord’s day, to this noblest

of all charities. Let them consider the classes as in some measure under their charge during the remainder of the week; and occasionally visit the homes of the children, especially when they neglect to attend. And, to insure punctual attendance on the part of the scholar, let the teacher himself be punctual; let him be diligent and zealous, and he can hardly fail to produce a corresponding assiduity and interest in his pupils. Let him not be disheartened by any difficulties which he may at first encounter. He will find much that will require the exercise of patience and forbearance towards those stubborn, thoughtless, or perhaps stupid children, whom he has set himself to reclaim and instruct. Indeed, the brightest Christian graces, humility, self-denial, long-suffering, meekness, gentleness, charity, will all be called forth in the discharge of his voluntary task; but let him bear in mind, as matter of the highest encouragement to patient

and untiring perseverance, that the improvement of each and all of these virtues and graces, renders him more and more meet for the enjoyment of that blessed promise to be fulfilled in him, "They that be teachers,* shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

Important however as Sunday-schools are, as auxiliaries to the clergyman in feeding the lambs of his flock, my master thought they ought never to supersede the good old fashion of catechising the children, "openly in the church," as the rubric directs. On the afternoon of the last Sunday in each month, therefore, he assembled all the children, Sunday scholars and others, in the body of the church, and instructed them in the catechism. Most of the adult members of the congregation at-

* Dan. xii. 3, marginal reading.

tended on these occasions, and seemed to derive as much pleasure and profit from the exercises, as the children themselves. Soon after he came to the parish, an intelligent lady of his congregation told him that she had learned more respecting the true principles of the church, from his familiar catechising, than from any other source. Many adults of his flock afterwards bore a like testimony, and encouraged him to persevere in this course.

CHAPTER X.

A new acquaintance.—A candid inquirer after “the old paths.”—The Prayer Book passes into other hands.—Prejudices against the church resulting from ignorance of her character and claims.—Episcopal Theologians.—Eloquent tribute of a Presbyterian Divine to Episcopacy.

ONE morning when my master was reading in his study and I was lying on the table before him, a young man of plain but pleasing appearance came in, and after apologizing for the interruption, said, “If Mr. P—— was at leisure, he should be glad to have some religious conversation with him.” My master immediately shut his book, and returned it to the shelf; saying, with a benevolent smile, that such visits could never be ill-timed to a clergyman, and he should now be very happy to listen to him.

The young man began, with great modesty and some slight embarrassment, by saying that he had been educated a Presbyterian by his parents, who were pious and exemplary members of that denomination; and that, until within a few months, he had never had any knowledge of the Episcopal Church. He had recently married and removed to this village, where he and his wife had attended the worship of the Church a few times; and having met with some small tracts explanatory of her doctrines and worship, he wished to become better acquainted with them; and had therefore called to request Mr. P—— to put him in a way of gaining more information on these subjects. He said he had been baptized in his infancy, and had long felt it his duty to unite with some church, by receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; but he was not altogether satisfied with that system in which he had been brought up, and therefore

he never could bring his mind cordially to embrace it. He mentioned his parents with great respect, and said he ascribed all his seriousness and piety, under God, to their early parental instruction and pious example. Of his mother, particularly, he spoke in the most affectionate terms, as having been his best earthly counsellor and friend in his early days. Since he had been separated from her he had often occasion to bless God for the pains she took to impress religious maxims on his young heart. He had no doubt, he said, that if the result of his inquiries should be a preference for the Church, and he should be led, from a sense of duty, to unite himself with her communion, it would be a source of grief to his beloved mother ; for he had often heard her speak as if she thought there could be no piety among Episcopalians, and that their religion was altogether a religion of forms. He excused his parent for such erroneous opinions,

which he admitted he himself had entertained until very lately, by observing that she had always lived in a remote part of the state, far from any congregation of the Episcopal Church, with no means of becoming acquainted with its doctrine or discipline. While he lamented her prejudices, he spoke of them with great tenderness, and said it would be a matter of regret to him if he should ever be obliged to differ from her in religious sentiments, even in points of comparatively minor importance; but he felt it his duty to search for the truth, and, having found it, to embrace it at all hazards; because He who calls himself, emphatically, the Truth, hath said, “He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.”*

My master heard him with great attention; commended him for the course we was pursuing, and above all, for his filial respect and

* Matt. x. 37.

affection; which, he said, were the best evidence of “an honest and good heart,” rightly disposed to investigate religious subjects, and suitably prepared for the reception of divine truth. I myself was so delighted with the appearance and conversation of this young man, that I longed to become better acquainted with him; and it so turned out that my wish was fully gratified. After answering such questions as he was pleased to propose, my master gave him several books of instruction, which he commended to his careful perusal, and then taking me from the table he presented me to him, begging him to read me attentively, and he would there learn by the help of those other books, every thing he wished to know concerning the doctrine, the ministry, and the worship of the Church. “After you have studied it sufficiently yourself,” said Mr. P——, “you can, if you please, send this Pocket Prayer Book to your good mother; it

may be the means of removing some of her prejudices, and give her a more favourable opinion of our Church. Let me see you as often as you can make it convenient to call; and may 'the Spirit of Truth guide you into all truth.' ” The young man took his leave, thanking the minister for his kindness, and saying he should like to converse with him again in a few days.

That evening, when my new master, Mr. L——, returned home from his labour, he sat down to read me with great attention; and every day, for some weeks, I occupied a great portion of his leisure hours. At night, when the business of the day was done, he always read aloud for an hour or two to his wife, either from my pages, or from some one of the books which Mr. P—— had lent him; for whatever religious opinions he himself might embrace, he felt it important that his family should agree with him.

In a few days he repeated his visit to the worthy rector, and I fortunately happened to be with him. We found him busy in writing, but he immediately laid aside his pen, and expressed his pleasure at seeing my young master again. Mr. L—— said he had come to return such of the books as he had read, and to ask the loan of others. “From these,” he continued, “I have derived much profitable instruction. They have indeed poured in a flood of light upon my darkened understanding. I am utterly astonished at my own ignorance of the Church, and am almost ashamed to confess it. Would you believe it possible, I had thought until I read those books, that the number of Episcopalians was small, compared with other religious denominations; and I could hardly credit the fact, even when it was demonstrated to me, that they constituted by far the greater part of the whole Christian world; and that all the sects

together are but a mere handful, in comparison with those who are strictly Episcopal. I also thought that your Church had never produced many men distinguished for learning or piety ; but now I see and lament my gross ignorance on this subject ; for I find that in the long catalogue of great names of modern times, of those whose works are imperishable monuments of wisdom and piety, by much the greater portion were Episcopal divines, and the English Church, I see, can boast a constellation of theologians, far outshining all their contemporaries. And as to the theological writers in the first fifteen hundred years of the Christian era, there can be no question ; if it can be proved, as I think it can, that the universal church was Episcopal, until the Reformation.”

“ You are right,” said the good rector, his countenance brightening up with unusual animation, as he spoke ; “ you are right, my

young friend ; nor does your former ignorance at all surprise me. Until I was twenty years of age I knew as little of the Church as you did. I was born of pious Congregational parents, in New England, and was sent, when young, to a Calvinistic college, where I remained utterly ignorant of the simplest features of Episcopacy. Indeed, I knew nothing of them until I was graduated, and went to reside in a town where I had frequent opportunities of attending the services of the Church. Nor can I help looking back with astonishment at my own ignorance ; for my opportunities of reading and information were much greater than yours have been. What most surprises me is, that I could have studied, while in college, the great works of Butler and Paley, without once thinking that the ‘Analogy of Religion,’ the ‘Evidences of Christianity,’ the ‘Moral Philosophy,’ and ‘Natural Theology,’ which were the text books

there, were all written by divines of the English Church. You may, perhaps, think I must have been uncommonly stupid; but the fact was, I had never been inside of an Episcopal church; I never heard any thing said about it, while under my father's roof; at college the subject was never introduced; and I knew no more about it than I did about the koran. My mind was strongly turned to the ministry, while in college; but had I commenced my theological studies then, it would have been with a view of entering the Congregational Church, for I knew no other.

“What you say concerning the writings of Episcopal divines,” he continued, glancing his eye around his well-furnished library, “is all very just. Our most approved theological works, those, I mean, which are in highest estimation among all denominations of Protestant Christians, are generally written by Episcopalians. See that long range of fo-

lios," pointing to the lowest shelf of his library ; "those are the productions of Church of England men, who applied their mighty intellects to the study and elucidation of the Scriptures ; and from their abundant stores most modern divines draw their richest supplies, either for the press or the pulpit. Look through the libraries of any of the ministers in this country, no matter of what denomination, and take from them all that has been written by Episcopal clergymen and laymen, and a meagre catalogue would remain. I do not mean to say that other denominations cannot boast of eminently pious and learned men ; for I have many commentaries, written by their greatest divines, which I value highly, and which I seldom consult without deriving pleasure and instruction from them. The commentaries of Doddridge are among my favourite works ; and so are those of Macknight, and Campbell, and Dwight ; with many others

which might be named. But I do say, that all these writers are, in comparison to Episcopal theologians, as a single star to 'the sun shining in his strength.' This is no vain boasting. It is an indisputable fact, that all the clergymen in these United States are indebted more or less, to the divines of the English Church. Ought they not, therefore, to disabuse the minds of their people, when they hear this Church derided and scoffed at? Ought they not freely to own their obligations to her burning and shining lights, for much of that reflected brightness which they themselves are able to display? While they are recommending to the people of their charge the practical works of Law, and Beveridge, and Sherlock, and Horne, and Porteus, and Scott, and Newton, and Richmond, and Melville, and Wilberforce, and Hannah More, while they are extolling the missionary zeal of a Heber and a Martyn, can they listen pa-

tiently, and without a word of reproof, to the calumnies which are so plenteously lavished on the Episcopal Church? Would it not be well for them to stop the mouths of these railing accusers, by reminding them, that their sweeping slander touches some of the purest spirits that have ever enlightened and blessed the world by their labours? Why will they not all say, as one of their most accomplished scholars and favorite divines has said, with a frankness which does equal credit to his head and heart? ‘We remember that it was under the Episcopacy that the Church in England took its firm stand against the Papacy; and that this was its form when Zion rose to light and splendour from the dark night of ages. We remember Cranmer,—Cranmer first, in many respects, among the reformers; that it was by his steady and unerring hand, that, under God, the pure Church of the Saviour was conducted through the agitating and dis-

tressing times of Henry VIII. We remember that God watched over that wonderful man ; that he gave this distinguished prelate access to the heart of one of the most capricious, cruel, inexorable, blood-thirsty, and licentious monarchs that has disgraced the world ; that God, for the sake of Cranmer and his Church, conducted Henry, as ‘ by a hook in the nose,’ and made him faithful to the Archbishop of Canterbury, when faithful to none else. The world will not soon forget the names of Latimer, and Ridley, and Rogers, and Bradford ; names associated in the feelings of Christians, with the long list of eminent confessors, of whom the world was not worthy ; and who did honour to the entire ages of mankind, by sealing their attachment to the Son of God, on the rack, or amid the flames. Nor can we forget that we owe to Episcopacy that which fills our minds with gratitude and praise, when we look for examples of consecrated talent, and

elegant literature, and humble devoted piety. While men honour elevated Christian feeling; while they revere sound learning; while they render tribute to clear and profound reasoning; they will not forget the names of Barrow, and Taylor, of Tillotson, and Hooker, and Butler; and when they think of humble, pure, sweet, heavenly piety, their minds will recur instinctively to the name of Leighton. Such names, with a host of others, do honour to the world. When we think of them, we have it not in our hearts to utter one word against a church which has thus done honour to our race, and to our common Christianity.' This is the warm, honest, honourable expression, of one of the most distinguished and exemplary divines of the Presbyterian Church, that the present age can boast of. Would that these sentiments found a cordial response in the bosoms of all his bre-

thren! But I ought to apologize, perhaps, for detaining you thus long with these views; I am now ready to listen to you."

CHAPTER XI.

Doctrines of the Church.—Necessity of a change of heart.—Comprehensiveness of the Prayer Book.—Advantages of Public Formularies.—Calvin's Opinion on this subject.—Length of the Daily Service.

“It is sometimes confidently asserted,” my young master observed, “that Episcopalians do not believe in the necessity of a change of heart; and I will thank you to inform me whether such is the fact respecting any of them; for your sermon last Sunday, on those words of David, ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me,’* satisfied my mind that your own views of conversion were truly scriptural.”

“That is an old and oft-refuted calumny,” Mr. P—— replied, “which, so far as my ob-

* Ps. li. 10.

servation goes, has no foundation whatever in truth; and which never would be uttered by any person at all acquainted with our standards. The remarks just made to you, respecting that glorious constellation of divines, who for centuries have been the light and defence, under God, of the Protestant faith, prove how groundless the charge is with respect to them. But I will go further and say, that I never knew an Episcopal clergyman, and I never heard of one, who did not believe that man is by nature fallen and corrupt; that his sinful heart must be changed; that he must be renewed in the spirit of his mind, and become a new creature in Christ Jesus, by the operations of divine grace; before he can be fitted for the bliss and glories of heaven. Whoever believes in the corruption of human nature, whoever believes, as our ninth Article expresses it, that 'man is very far gone from original righteouness,' must

consequently believe in the absolute necessity of a change of heart ; because ‘ without holiness no man shall see the Lord ;’ and he must be faithless to his ordination vows, who neglects to press this great, this fundamental truth, frequently and earnestly upon his hearers, ‘ Ye must be born again.’

“ But let me refer you to the Prayer Book ; the only proper standard of what Episcopalians do, or do not, believe. Without stopping to consider your single objection, I will confidently ask, What doctrine does the Bible contain, as ‘ necessary to salvation,’ that is not, again and again, clearly and distinctly set forth in our liturgy ? Indeed, I will go further, and ask, Where is the orthodox church in Christendom, that gives such prominence to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, as our own ? And where will you find a body of clergy more zealous and faithful than ours, in explaining and enforcing these doctrines ?

None of us, alas ! are as devoted in our Master's cause as we ought to be ; but, for fidelity and zeal, we think we shall not suffer in the comparison with ministers of any other denomination.

“ One of the greatest advantages of a public formulary, like ours, is to bring the primary and essential truths of the Gospel before the people in a regular and connected order. You have only to run your eye over its pages, to be convinced with what admirable beauty and propriety the compilers of our liturgy have arranged the services for every day in the year. A little attention to the Lessons, Gospels, and Epistles, for each day, will show with what judgment they are selected and suited to the occasion. You will generally find the second Lesson illustrating the first, and the Epistle and Gospel explaining each other ; thereby making scripture its own interpreter. Beginning with the advent of the

Messiah, the Church follows our blessed Saviour, step by step, from the cradle to the cross; making 'Jesus Christ, and him crucified,' the corner stone, the very foundation of the gospel scheme of salvation. First reciting the prophecies which announce his coming, she goes on to show their fulfilment in his birth, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension; then she proceeds to commemorate the wonderful effusion of the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost; and closes her most important festivals by celebrating the mystery of the adorable Trinity, and ascribing equal and undivided 'glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.'

"Another distinguished excellence of our Prayer Book is, that it excludes from the Church 'all erroneous and strange doctrines;' and it preserves those who use it, from falling into heresy and error. An honest person cannot possibly unite in our services, and yet re-

tain very dangerous opinions; he must either renounce his errors, or lay aside the liturgy. Here he learns to pay divine honours to that Saviour, Christ, who is 'God over all, blessed for ever.' Here he is continually reminded of man's fallen and helpless state; of his absolute need of a Saviour; the extent and efficacy of Christ's atonement; the necessity of renewing and sanctifying grace; the eternity of future rewards and punishments; the necessity of repentance, of faith, and all holy obedience, to qualify him for that happiness which the Redeemer purchased with his blood, and to which the Holy Ghost is sent to lead him. Here, in short, he is continually reminded of all those truths, 'which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health.' I could relate many interesting facts, to prove to you the conservative influence of the Prayer Book; but I will mention only one, which came under my own observation, and which, I think,

will display to you, in a very striking manner, the tendency of the liturgy to preserve, unimpaired, the great doctrines of the Gospel. Two clergymen, one a Presbyterian, the other an Episcopalian, having the pastoral care of large congregations, fell about the same time into error, respecting that cardinal doctrine of Christianity, the Divinity of Christ. The former continued his ministrations as before, omitting, however, both in his prayers and sermons, all reference to this subject; and his congregation, accustomed by degrees to the omission, ultimately became, like himself, Socinian in their belief; and still retain him as their minister. The Episcopal clergyman pursued the same course, in his sermons from the pulpit; but the full recognition of this great truth, which he was obliged to make in the services at the desk and altar, was such as an ingenuous mind could not endure; and he soon felt compelled to resign his charge. He was

shortly after displaced from the ministry. Although he possessed, in a remarkable degree, the esteem and affection of his parishioners, for he was a man of great purity of character, and goodness of heart, yet not one of them imitated his defection. Immediately after his resignation, Providence sent them a pious, faithful, and sound clergyman, who is now their pastor; and the congregation is one of the most flourishing in our country. As respects their first minister, there can be no doubt that he was never a firm believer in the Trinity; for soon after his ordination, he said to a friend, that his mind was unsettled on that subject, and that he intended giving it a full investigation. His friend replied, that he ought to have examined the subject, and fully satisfied his mind, before he ventured to take upon himself the ordination vows.

“I ought also to mention, as another of the many excellencies of our liturgy, that it makes

the devotions of the congregation entirely independent of the talents, or opinions, or feelings, of their officiating minister. The great reformer, Calvin, himself saw what an immense advantage this must be; and his words are worthy the consideration of all his admirers; 'As to a form of prayer, and ecclesiastical rites,' he says, 'I highly approve that it should be certain, from which it may not be lawful for any minister to depart; as well in consideration of the weakness and ignorance of some, as that it may more plainly appear how our churches agree among themselves; and lastly, that a stop may be put to the giddiness of those who affect novelties.' Now whatever may be the 'weakness' or the 'ignorance' of the minister, in our Church, he has a pure and rational formulary for his guide; nor do I feel at liberty to add to, or abridge, this form. If any thing must be omitted, I consider it my duty to shorten the sermon, not the liturgy."

“Your remark,” said Mr. L——, “about shortening the liturgy, reminds me that I have sometimes heard the morning service objected to as too long; is that your opinion?”

“To some persons, undoubtedly,” Mr. P—— replied, “the shortest prayers would seem too long; but I should hardly think this objection would be urged against our services, by any one who has rightly considered the subject. You have no doubt observed that I read very deliberately; and yet the morning service never occupies more than an hour and a quarter, and the evening service seldom an hour; including the singing, chanting, psalms, and lessons. I say nothing about the sermon, because that is left to the discretion of the minister; and he may make it longer or shorter, as he sees fit. Here, then, are only two hours and a quarter employed, in both parts of the day, for offering up our prayers and praises to Almighty God, and for reading and hearing

his Holy Word. And can this be considered too large a portion of that seventh day, which he has set apart and sanctified for that very end? It must be borne in mind, that the great object of all religious assemblies on the Lord's day, is to worship God; which can be done only by prayer and praise. Hence God's house is emphatically styled a 'House of Prayer.' Keeping this design in view, can the services of the Church be justly considered too long and tedious, to engage our hearts only one day in seven, and that a day, the whole of which was appointed for this special purpose?"

"There is much force in what you say," my master observed, "and although, since I began to like your liturgy, I have never been wearied with its length, yet your remarks will better enable me to answer the objections of others. But do you not think that a constant repetition of the same forms, will in time become irksome? I have heard it complained of,

that your service is the same thing over and over again ; and it has also been said, that it would be less tedious were there more variety.”

“I know this is sometimes said,” replied Mr. P——, “but only by those who seek novelties. For myself I can say, that so far from the services becoming irksome by frequent repetition, they are continually rendered more and more interesting. Hardly a day passes but I discover some new beauties, which commend them more strongly to my understanding and my heart. Where the imagination only is consulted, I grant you that novelty is desirable ; but not so with the affections. That which we most love, we never desire should change ; it never becomes wearisome. Can any thing be sweeter to a child’s ear than the voice of a mother ? Is any object more agreeable to the eye than the countenance of an old friend ? Do we not wish to see our parents

and friends, whom we dearly love, always the same? And why? Because the heart is interested; these are objects which seize upon the affections. But to gratify the imagination, scenes must be continually changing; and this, I conceive, is the true cause of the objection sometimes brought against the liturgy, that it is always the same. The objectors seek to gratify the ear, while the heart remains unaffected. They do not, perhaps, consider that our public mercies, and our public wants, are daily the same; and that our prayers and praises should be so too. But you will excuse me from entering further into this discussion; I have an engagement to fulfil at this hour, and I shall be happy to see you on some other day."

CHAPTER XII.

The Prayer Book is sent by Mr. L——, a present to his mother.—His letter.—How received by the good lady. Her prejudices against the Church.—How removed.—An interesting Conversation.—Undesigned eulogium on the office for Family Devotion.

My new master continued his examination of the doctrines and worship of the Church with unabated interest; daily praying that the Spirit of divine truth would enlighten his understanding, and enable him both rightly to discern, and fearlessly to pursue, the good and the right way. In all cases of doubt and difficulty he advised with his minister, who obligingly aided him by his counsel, and by putting into his hands the most suitable books of instruction and practical piety. In the course of a few months both he and his wife united themselves with the Church by receiving

the holy communion ; I trust with such dispositions of heart as rendered them “meet partakers of those holy mysteries.”

Immediately after this event, I was sent a present to his mother, as Mr. P—— had suggested. This good lady lived in another part of the state, and was the mistress of a small but respectable public house. Her son wrote to her on this occasion, and I cannot help transcribing the conclusion of his letter which I heard read.

After informing her of his having joined the communion of the Episcopal Church, he says :

“I know, my dear mother, that this will greatly excite your surprise ; but believe me, I have done it after patient and candid examination, with prayer for the guidance of divine wisdom, and from a full conviction that I was acting right. Knowing the unfavourable opinion you entertain of the Church to which I

have attached myself, and convinced, as I am, that more information on the subject, than you have ever had it in your power to obtain, would entirely remove your objections, I have taken the liberty to send you a Prayer Book. I beg, my dearest mother, you will give it an attentive perusal; and then tell me whether you think that a Church, which maintains such doctrines, and worships with such a form, can be much in the wrong, either in creed or practice.

“Believe me, my beloved mother, I never was happier in my life. There is something so decent, orderly, and solemn, in the manner in which our services are performed, that I always feel as if I was truly worshipping God, ‘with the spirit and with the understanding also.’

“You, who have been many years a conscientious communicant in another church, no doubt feel more of the spirit of true devotion

when worshipping God in your own way ; and it rejoices me to think that hereafter, through the infinite mercies of our common Redeemer, we shall both be permitted to join in that one worship, which angels and saints continually pay around his throne. Although distance now separates us, and there are some points of difference in our religious views, yet I trust we shall ever be one in heart and affection. To you, my dear mother, I am indebted, under God, for all my early religious impressions. May he abundantly reward and bless you, for all your care and kindness towards me ; may He take us both into His holy keeping, and finally bring us to Himself, never more to be separated from Him, or from each other. And this I trust he will do, for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

“Most affectionately and truly, your son,

“B. L——.”

This letter was put into her hand, at the

same time that I was presented to her. She paid no attention to me, but seemed wholly engrossed with her son's letter. The tears rolled down her cheeks as she read it; but whether they were tears of joy or of sorrow, I could not at first determine. Some expressions of regret, however, at her son's having joined the Church, led me to conclude that her tears were not altogether the overflowings of a glad and grateful heart. But there was so much kindness and affection breathed throughout the letter, that it must have softened her feelings; and I heard her say aloud, after reading it a second time—"Well, after all, I do believe he is a Christian; he was always one of the best and most dutiful of sons, and this act of his is almost the only one of his life, of which I ever had any reason to complain." The good woman wiped her eyes, as the remembrance of her son's former love and obedience occurred, to soothe the grief which

his present conduct had occasioned. Folding up the letter, she took me in her hand, and after carelessly turning over my leaves a few times, she laid me down with a deep drawn sigh; that told the bitterness of her reflections.

For many days I remained altogether unnoticed. Now and then my new mistress would hastily read a page or two, but evidently without feeling any interest in the subject. Being the gift of a favourite son, she probably could not bring her mind to throw me wholly aside.

Some weeks after I became her property, I was lying on a table in the little parlour, where strangers usually sat; for my mistress, as I before remarked, was the landlady of a respectable inn, when a gentleman in black was shown into the room. Having thrown aside his travelling coat, and taken his seat by the fire, he asked if he could be accommodated with supper and lodging for the night. She replied in the affirmative, and immediately

commenced the necessary preparations. While she was spreading the cloth for tea, I attracted the attention of the stranger, and taking me up he said, "So, madam, I see you have a Prayer Book here; are your family Episcopalians?"

"No, sir," she replied, "that is a book which my son sent me."

"Your son, then, probably belongs to the Episcopal Church?"

"Yes, sir, he and his wife have lately joined it, and I am sorry for it."

"But why so; why are you sorry?"

"Because I do not believe there is any religion in that Church."

"That, certainly, is a sufficient reason; you have just cause to mourn, if your son belongs to a church which has no religion in it. But do you mean to say, that you think your son is destitute of religious principles?"

"Oh, no! by no means! If ever there was

a Christian, I believe he is one; but I think there is less of true piety in that church than in any other."

"Will you be so kind as to state your reasons for this opinion; for it is surely a very serious charge."

Here I saw my mistress looked a little confused, as those persons are apt to look, who make unqualified assertions, and are unexpectedly called upon to substantiate them. However, soon regaining her composure, she said "there was so much of form in that mode of worship, that she had been led to suppose there could not be a great deal of real religion there."

"Well, but have you ever read those forms attentively? Have you ever read this Prayer Book?"

"Not much of it, I confess; I never could endure forms of prayer."

"Have you ever read any Episcopal books, either doctrinal or practical?"

“Never one, that I know of.”

“Did you ever hear the service read, or an Episcopal clergyman preach?”

Here my mistress seemed to take courage, as if an idea had been suggested which would extricate her from the unpleasant dilemma into which she had unguardedly fallen; for she immediately replied, with no little triumph, “Yes, I once heard an Episcopal minister preach, and I did not like his sermon; he said nothing about total depravity, nor absolute election; and he proved to be a very bad man, and was degraded from the ministry.”

“All this may be very true; there are no doubt unworthy ministers to be found among every religious denomination; but it is far from being candid, or charitable, to condemn the whole on account of the errors of a few.”

The stranger now perceived how utterly ignorant she was of the subject, on which she at first so confidently pronounced an opinion;

he therefore despaired of convincing her by any formal argument. He could not talk to her about the excellency of the Prayer Book, for she had never read it; nor of the beauty of the service, for she had heard it performed but once in her life; nor could he refer her to Episcopal writers, for by her own acknowledgment she had never read any; so he said—

“Madam, did you ever hear of John Rogers?”

“What, he who was burnt at Smithfield, in the reign of the bloody Mary?”

“The same.”

“Yes, every child has heard of him. I remember when I was a little girl, exactly how he used to look in the primer, with his wife and ten small children standing by, when he was offered a pardon, if he would renounce his faith; but he chose to be burnt alive, in sight of his dear wife and babes. Many a time have I cried over his sad story.”

“You think, then, John Rogers must have been a good man?”

“Why, to be sure I do. Does not every body think him a Christian martyr, who died gloriously for the faith of Christ?”

“Do you think he would belong to a church which had no religion in it, or that he would make use of prayers which were sinful?”

“By no means; I believe he was as good a Christian as ever lived; and I wish there were many such now-a-days.”

“Well, this same John Rogers was an Episcopal clergyman; he belonged to the same Church to which your son belongs; and he used the same form of prayers, in substance, which your son now uses, and which you think so unmeaning. You probably never thought of this before; and it is very possible that you are more indebted to Episcopal authors, for your religious knowledge, than you are aware of; for you say, and no doubt think, you have

never read any of their works. Will you allow me to look at your devotional books?"

My mistress readily consented, little suspecting that she possessed a single volume written by a churchman. Opening a small closet in the room, she pointed to a shelf, saying, "There are all my religious books."

The stranger began to examine them, and the first he took down was "The World without Souls," by the Rev. J. W. Cunningham. A slight smile played upon his lips, as he said, "What think you of this little work?"

"Oh, that is one of the best books I ever read."

"I am happy to hear that you think so, for it was written by a clergyman of the English Church."

"You surprise me; but whoever wrote it must have been a good man."

"Here," he continued, "is 'Sherlock on Death;' what is your opinion of that?"

“A very pious work, which I have often read with much pleasure and profit; but do you mean to say that was written by an Episcopalian?”

“I do; and one of the most distinguished divines of our Church. But what comes next? ‘Law’s Serious Call,’ ‘Dairyman’s Daughter,’ ‘Young Cottager,’ ‘Zion’s Pilgrim,’ ‘Scott’s Force of Truth,’ ‘John Newton’s Works;’ all by Episcopal divines, and I dare say you esteem them all as excellent devotional books.”

“That I do,” she replied; “they are my spiritual treasury, and I am ashamed to think how little I knew about the authors. If the Episcopal Church has produced such men as these, I will never again object to my son’s having joined it, but bless God that he has fallen into such excellent company.”

Here the conversation was interrupted by the servant’s bringing in the gentleman’s supper.

That evening, the stranger, who proved to be a clergyman, was asked to officiate at family prayers; and kneeling down, without any book before him, he repeated from memory the forms appointed for that purpose. Before he retired, my mistress said to him, "I was quite delighted with your prayer this evening; and I think you yourself will acknowledge that such a prayer, offered extempore, is much better than any form." He smiled, and taking me up, he turned to the office for family devotion, saying, "There is the prayer, word for word, which you have heard me use, and which has so justly excited your admiration." Then bidding her good night, he left the room.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Prayer Book resumes its travels.—Autumnal Scenery.—Journey through Ohio and Pennsylvania.—Mineral Springs at B——. Church service in a Presbyterian house of worship.—Returns to New York.—Unexpected separation from its master.—Comes into possession of a layman.—Witnesses the gathering of a new congregation, and the erection of another Church, in South-western New York.

THE next morning, when the stranger was about departing, he proposed to my mistress to exchange a larger and much more costly Prayer Book, which he had with him, for me; as he had yet a long journey to perform, and would find me more convenient to carry. To this she readily assented, and I again entered upon my travels. The clergyman into whose possession I now came was returning from the south, to his parish in the state of New York, having been travelling some months for the

benefit of his health. Long shall I remember, with delight, our journey in this most interesting section of our country. As we passed along through that fertile and highly cultivated region, which forms the southern portion of Ohio, and beheld many large and flourishing villages, with a thriving and happy yeomanry, it was difficult to realize, that even within the memory of persons then living, this whole tract was a "waste, howling wilderness." Yet such was the fact; the tide of emigration, rolling westward from the Atlantic, had swept away the forests in its course; towns and villages had arisen in their place; and the war-whoop of the Indian, and the howling of wild beasts, had been succeeded by the busy hum of population, and the noise of the hammer of the artisan.

It was the delightful month of October; a season peculiarly favourable for travelling, in our northern and middle states. The days

were bright and clear, and there was an elasticity in the air, which imparted animation and vigour to both mind and body. The fields, it is true, had lost much of their freshness; but the forest trees were putting on their richest livery. The deep and varied tints of the maple and the sumach might vie with the brightest colours of the rainbow; and none but His hand, who “bended” the heavenly arch, could produce such an exquisite assemblage of bright and brilliant hues, as the woods every where presented. Crossing the Ohio river, and through a part of Virginia, we entered upon the magnificent mountain scenery of Pennsylvania. Here nature appeared in its wildest and grandest form. Those lofty Alleghanies, whose blue peaks I had often admired in the distance, now towered majestically around me, and directed the thoughts of the traveller to Him who, with resistless might, piled together these huge masses; and

of whom it is said, He hath “weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance.”* After journeying several days among these mountains, sometimes crossing over their rugged summits, and then again passing them by a deep ravine, which some rapid torrent had worn, as it struggled to meet the Ohio or the Susquehanna, we entered the delightful valley, where stands the village of B——, about two miles from which are the mineral springs of the same name. Here my master concluded to rest awhile from the fatigues of his journey; and a pleasanter spot than these springs afforded could not be desired. It reminded me of “the happy valley,” so beautifully described by Johnson, in his *Rasselas*. It was indeed a valley of surpassing loveliness; surrounded by lofty and precipitous mountains, whose sides and summits were covered with

* Isa. xl. 12.

majestic forest trees, now clothed in the richest robes of autumn.

During our stay here, my master was invited to officiate on a Sunday, in the neighbouring village of B——; and there being no other clergyman in the town, the “meeting house” was kindly offered him. He took me with him into the pulpit, and read the daily morning and evening prayers; but as there were no Episcopalians to take the responsive part of the service, much of its beauty was necessarily lost; still there was such simplicity and pious pathos in the language of the liturgy, as to draw forth great praise from many of the congregation, who had never heard it before. The singing was excellent; all the congregation appearing to join in it, as the clergyman read to them, line by line, the psalm or hymn.

On our leaving this retired and peaceful valley, we travelled leisurely along through the

rich central region of Pennsylvania; nothing special occurring until we entered the state of New York. Here, to my great grief, I was separated from my master, whom I had anxiously wished to accompany home to his parish. Stopping one night at a public house, he took me out to read, as was his custom before going to bed; and the next morning, rising early to proceed on his journey, in the hurry of departure I was forgotten, and he went away leaving me on the table in his bed-room. There the chamber-maid found me, and knowing that I must be the property of the traveller just gone, she took me into her own possession. She kept me, however, but a little while; for a travelling pedler coming along, she bartered me away for some trifling ornament of dress. He sold me to a gentleman who had just organized a small congregation, and wished to procure a few Prayer Books for their immediate use. I was gratified with this

last exchange, for I expected once more to witness the interesting scene of a new congregation growing up, under the nursing care of a pious and intelligent layman. And this expectation was fully realized. My master, Mr. F——, was a merchant in S——, a small village in the south-western part of New York. He and his wife had been educated in the Presbyterian Church; and having, about the same time, had their attention awakened to the importance of eternal things, and feeling it their duty to make a public profession of their faith in Christ, they set about the important inquiry, With what denomination of Christians should they connect themselves? The village in which they resided, contained congregations of almost every name, excepting the Episcopal; but in each of these they found something objectionable, either in doctrine or worship, which prevented their uniting with its communion. Of the Episcopal Church,

they at that time knew nothing. But while their minds were in this unsettled state, it providentially happened that "Father N——," whose history has already been related, in his missionary travels, stopped at the tavern in S——. My master hearing of his arrival, invited him to his house, that he and his wife might learn from this venerable missionary, something respecting the doctrines, ministry, and worship of the Church. Nearly the whole night was spent in listening to the instructions of this holy man; and before the morning light dawned, both my master and his wife had made up their minds to unite with the Episcopal Church. The nearest place of worship was fourteen miles distant, and the way to it was over a very hilly country, and rough road; yet thither my master and his family went every Saturday evening, that they might be there in time for the commencement of the service on Sunday morning. After a time,

this was found to be very inconvenient, and Mr. F—— determined to have a church nearer home. It was an arduous attempt indeed, to build up the church in a village where there were such a variety of congregations already, and where his was the only Episcopal family. But my master was not a man to be discouraged by such circumstances. He knew from his own experience, that if the prevailing ignorance respecting the Church could be removed, many would be found flocking into it. He accordingly hired a room, commenced lay-reading, invited such of his neighbours, as chose, to join him. For a time, the number of attendants was very small; and Mrs. F—— was almost the only one to make the responses. The congregation, however, gradually and steadily increased. A lot containing four acres of land, which was sufficiently large for a burial ground, and other purposes, was purchased in the centre of the village; and in

process of time, a very neat, commodious, and well-arranged church-edifice was erected upon it. On the day of its consecration, the Bishop administered the holy rite of confirmation to thirty-nine persons. Through the zeal and enterprise of the parish, aided by the missionary fund of the diocese, a minister was now settled over them. The church was furnished with a bell, organ, and communion plate, and all other things necessary to the performance of the service, with decency and in order. Nor was there any burdensome debt incurred, by these operations; all were paid for by contributions made in the village; with the exception of a few hundred dollars given by some benevolent individuals in the city of New York. In a few years after the church was completed, a neat and convenient parsonage house was also erected; which contributed greatly to the comfort of the minister. My master lived to see the church well filled with

worshippers, and more than seventy communicants at its altar. He had established a Sunday-school, which he superintended himself, and which numbered eighty scholars, and sixteen teachers, with a well selected library of five hundred volumes. And all these things were accomplished in the short space of ten years, from the time the church was first organized.

I have anticipated my history a little, to give the result of my master's labours in the cause of the church. His death occurred a few years after I left him.

CHAPTER XIV.

Unlooked for separation.—A young Convict.—Form of Prayer for the Visitation of Prisoners.—A penitent Criminal.—Advantage of Prayer Books in our State Prisons.—The Convict released.

I HAD been with my master about five years, when I was unexpectedly separated from him, in the following singular and painful manner. One day while the family were all out, and I was lying upon the sofa in the parlour, the door being open, a young man stole hastily in, cast his eye around to see what he might most handily take, then seizing a gold watch from the mantel, and at the same time thrusting me into his pocket, he made off, unperceived by any one. He was, however, soon after apprehended, tried, convicted, and sentenced to the state's prison for three years. On the day of trial, he exhibited strong feelings of remorse

and penitence, which I have since had every reason to believe were truly sincere.

My master, from whom he had stolen the watch, was so much affected by his appearance, for he was young in years, and probably young in crime, that he shed tears when sentence was pronounced against him. On his being remanded back to jail, this good man accompanied him, and begged him to take me with him to his prison, as a profitable companion for his solitary hours. "You will," said my master, "be allowed a Bible in your cell, which I earnestly pray you may study attentively, and with a sincere desire of being brought to a knowledge of your sinful and wretched state. You will there read, on the pages of divine truth, that the 'wicked shall be turned into hell;' that, 'except you repent and believe, you shall perish' eternally; at the same time, you will also read for your encouragement, that if you do sincerely and earnestly

repent you of your sins, and turn to Jesus Christ by a true and lively faith, 'though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'* In your solitary confinement you will have much opportunity for serious reflection; and you will be forced, however unwillingly, to call your sins to remembrance. But if you repent and reform, there is yet a prospect of your being restored to the good opinion of the world, and becoming a useful and honourable member of society; for, in consideration of your youth, your term of imprisonment is limited to the shortest space the law allows. This Prayer Book will serve to remind you of the crime for which you are now punished. Let me earnestly entreat you to use it diligently, as you have opportunity. Here are prayers particularly suited to your condition;

* ls. i. 18.

especially the collects for Ash Wednesday, the general confession in the Communion Service, the Litany, and the penitential psalms ; which I will mark for you. But I would most strongly recommend ‘The form of Prayer for the visitation of Prisoners ;’ begging you to read, again and again, the impressive exhortation which it contains. There can be no language more appropriate to your case ; and I therefore now address you in those very words, and ‘Exhort you in the name of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Saviour, and as you tender your own salvation, to take good heed of these things in time, while the day of salvation lasteth ; for the night cometh, when no man can work. While you have the light, believe in the light, and walk as children of the light, that you be not cast into outer darkness ; that you may not knock when the door shall be shut ; and cry for mercy, when it is the time for justice. Now you are the object of

God's mercy, if by repentance and true faith, you turn unto him; but if you neglect these things, you will be the object of his justice and vengeance. Now you may claim the merits of Christ; but if you die in your sins, his sufferings will tend to your greater condemnation. O beloved, consider in this your day, how fearful a thing it will be to fall into the hands of the living God, when you can neither fly to his mercy to protect you, nor to the merits of Christ to cover you in that terrible day.' "

What effect this most solemn and affectionate exhortation had upon the young criminal at the time, I could not determine. He sobbed and wept bitterly all the while my master was with him; and when they parted, he only pressed his hand, and burst into a fresh flood of tears. I was pleased with these expressions of sensibility, because they plainly told that his heart was not altogether hardened in

crime ; and I hoped, that in time, divine grace would make it indeed such “a broken and contrite heart” as God has promised, “not to despise.”

When my master was removed to the prison, in the western part of the state, he took me with him, and was permitted to keep me in his cell. For some weeks he seldom looked into me, or his Bible, and I began to fear the advice of my late master had been entirely forgotten. He wept almost incessantly ; and, when alone, he would often break forth into loud and passionate expressions of grief ; but his sorrow seemed to arise rather from the conviction of his having brought indelible disgrace on himself, and shame and distress on his widowed mother, than from a consciousness of his own sinfulness in the sight of God. Often, while occupying his narrow cell, would he make the most piteous apostrophes to his poor, broken-hearted mother, whose gray

hairs, he said, he had "brought down with sorrow to the grave."

As his grief became less violent, he would occasionally take up his Bible and read a page or two, but apparently rather for the purpose of diverting his mind, and beguiling the tedious hours, than for obtaining spiritual benefit from it. As yet, I had remained altogether neglected; but one day taking me up, he providentially opened at the "exhortation," in the "Form for the visitation of Prisoners," where my late master had turned down a leaf, that it might attract his attention. He commenced reading; soon his mind became riveted to the subject; as he went on, he trembled from head to foot; large clammy drops stood on his pale forehead; and when he came to that expression, "O beloved, consider in this your day, how fearful a thing it will be to fall into the hands of the living God," he exclaimed in the bitterest agony, "What shall I do to

be saved?" Then striking his breast with his clenched hand, he cried out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." It was the first prayer I had ever heard him utter; it came from an humbled, contrite heart, and it entered into His ears, "who heareth prayer," and before whom "the sighing of the prisoner" always comes.

From that time, his Bible and Prayer Book became his constant study and delight. Again and again has he wept over the affecting story of the Prodigal Son, and then knelt down on the cold damp stones of his cell, and poured forth his soul in that penitential prayer, "Almighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all those who are penitent; create and make in me a new and contrite heart, that I, worthily lamenting my sins, and acknowledging my wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and

forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Then he would turn to that humble confession in the Communion Service, “Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, Judge of all men; I acknowledge and bewail my manifold sins and wickedness, which I from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy Divine Majesty; provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against me. I do earnestly repent, and am heartily sorry for these my misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto me; the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me, most merciful Father; for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, forgive me all that is past; and grant that I may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Still continuing on his knees, he would repeat, with

the greatest earnestness, portions of the fifty-first psalm; "Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness; according to the multitude of thy mercies, do away mine offences. Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my faults; and my sin is ever before me."

I remember in that deservedly popular little tract, "The Dairyman's Daughter," an interesting anecdote is related of "a very careless and profligate" person having "received a deep and serious conviction of his sin and danger, through some of the expressions contained in the burial service," which he heard read at the grave. The case of my master was somewhat similar; he often referred to the "exhortation," before alluded to, as the instrument through divine grace, of bringing him to a knowledge of the "truth as it is in Jesus." There, in his deep lone cell, a banished man,

shut out from the sun, and from all intercourse with his fellow men, that solemn address had been made to carry conviction to his heart; the bright beams of mercy had shone in upon him; he was "brought out of darkness and the shadow of death, into the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God;" by the grace of Christ he was made "free indeed."

Since that event, ever to be remembered, I have often thought what a blessing would be conferred on the convicts in our prisons, if in addition to a Bible, each one was presented with a Prayer Book. Not only would they have, in our truly evangelical Liturgy, a clear and connected exhibition of the great truths of the gospel, but they would find in it appeals to the heart the most solemn and impressive, and prayers admirably suited to their circumstances and condition.

At the expiration of his period of confinement, my master left the prison with very

different views from those with which he had entered it. An entire change had been wrought in him, through the power of the Holy Ghost; and he could now say, with David, "O Lord my God, I cried unto thee; and thou hast heard me. Thou, Lord, hast brought my soul out of hell."* "He brought me also out of the horrible pit, out of the mire and clay, and set my foot upon the rock, and ordered my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even a thanksgiving unto our God."†

He well knew that his crime and punishment had affixed a stigma upon his character, in the eyes of the world, which no subsequent good conduct could ever entirely remove. He therefore resolved to go to some distant part of the country, where he was unknown, and endeavour, by a life of industry and piety, again to become useful and respected in the

* Ps. xxx. 2, 3.

† Ps. xl. 2, 3.

world. His widowed mother had, more than a year before, gone down to the grave with a broken heart. Having therefore no earthly ties to bind him to his native place, he commenced his journey eastward, intending to take passage in New York for some of the southern states. His Bible and Prayer Book were tied up, together with his slender amount of clothing, in a small bundle, which he threw across his shoulder. Thus equipped, as he was travelling on foot along the road, I happened to fall out unperceived, and he went on, leaving me behind.

CHAPTER XV.

The Prayer Book again changes hands.—An aged Christian widow.—Her character.—Acts of charity.—Saturday-school for the poor.

A FEW hours after my master lost me, I was picked up by a little girl, who was returning home from school. She lived with her aged grandmother, a pious widow of three score and ten years. As she entered the house, her cheeks blooming with health and exercise, and her bright eyes sparkling with pleasure, she exclaimed, "See, grandma, what a nice Prayer Book I have found. It is much better than the one you gave me a long time ago, and if you please, I intend taking it with me to the church every Sunday. I am very glad I found it."

"But, my dear," said the good old lady, "you must recollect that you could not have

found it, unless some one had lost it; and I dare say, while you are rejoicing, he is grieving for his misfortune. And perhaps he cannot get another, whereas you could have done very well without it. We must make inquiries and see if we cannot find the owner, and restore it to him again. I doubt not you would do so cheerfully."

"That I would, grandmother; but if we cannot learn whose it is, then I suppose I may keep it myself."

"Certainly, my child; and I hope you will take good care of it, and derive much profitable instruction from its evangelical pages. It is, as you say, a very good one, although old and considerably worn."

I was quite pleased with the appearance of this aged Christian, when I first saw her; her look, her manner, her voice, were all expressive of those lovely graces and virtues, which adorn the true disciple of the blessed Jesus;

and which, I afterwards found, were more happily blended in her than in any individual I have ever known. I cannot attempt a full delineation of her character. She was truly a “mother in Israel;” and, like Dorcas, whose praise is in the gospel, “was full of good works, and alms-deeds which she did.”* Blessed with a competency of this world’s goods, and considering herself an almoner of the bounties of Providence, her delight was to minister, in every possible way, to the wants of the poor, the sick, and the afflicted; believing what an apostle hath told us, that “none of us liveth to himself.”† And yet, while all were celebrating her praises, while the poor spoke of her with the warmest affection, as their best earthly friend, while the widows and orphans were fond of “showing the coats and garments which she made” for

* Acts ix. 36.

† Rom. xiv. 7.

them, she continued the same humble, unostentatious, single-hearted Christian; altogether unconscious that she was doing more than others in her sphere of life. One of her most useful charities, which I take pleasure in recording, was a school of industry, which she had established in her own house. On every Saturday afternoon many of the poor female children of the village, those especially belonging to the Sunday-school of her own church, to the number of thirty or forty, assembled at her house; where she taught them to sew and knit, and employed them in making up coarse but comfortable clothing, for themselves and their little brothers and sisters, that they might all appear decently clad at church on a Sunday. Thus, while the naked were clothed, they learned how to provide for themselves, and acquired habits of industry and neatness, which rendered them useful to their parents at home.

For ten years had this benevolent lady persevered in her plans of training up the helpless children of the poor to industrious habits ; and every year brought fresh proofs of the utility of her scheme. It was a delightful privilege, which her friends often enjoyed, to enter the school-room on a Saturday afternoon, and see this venerable matron surrounded by her little pupils, all industriously at work with their needles, while the greatest order and stillness prevailed. But it was a much more gratifying spectacle to see them in their Sunday-school, or at church, comfortably and tidily dressed, in uniform frocks and bonnets which their own little hands had made.

Thus passed the life of this widow, in acts of charity and mercy. She had been, for very many years, an humble follower of her blessed Master's steps. Strongly attached to the church of her choice, and a conscientious observer of all its forms and ordinances, she dili-

gently used them as aids to devotion, and means wisely provided to help her forward in her Christian course. While she carefully guarded against “exalting the means of religion to the same importance with the end, she never expected to attain the end without using the means.” Hence she was always to be seen in her place in church, not only on a Sunday, but on all those holy days, when it was opened for prayers alone. Her great delight seemed to be in uniting in the solemn services of the sanctuary; and you would have thought that, like Anna the prophetess, her desire was “not to depart from the temple, but to serve God with fastings and prayers night and day.”*

Both young and old sought her society; for she was so kind and affectionate, so meek, and humble, and cheerful, that religion appeared

* Luke vii. 37.

in her in all its simple loveliness and grace. Her conversation on religious subjects evidently flowed from a heart full of the mercies of God; and her whole life was a beautiful exemplification of the power of godliness. Her religion was "pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." Hers was "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price." She has long since gone to receive the reward of those who diligently improve the talent entrusted to them, and are "faithful unto death;" and her name will ever be held in grateful remembrance by all who knew her. The widow and the orphan, the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, whom it was her great delight to minister unto, will, as memory recalls to them her numberless acts of charity and mercy, "rise up and call her blessed." As a proof of her unwearied perseverance in

well-doing, it may be mentioned, that at the time of her decease, her Saturday sewing school had been continued in her own house, without interruption, for about twenty years. Her interest in it was unabating to the last; and a few days before her death, she said to one of her near relatives, “What will my poor children do?” That relative kindly promised to superintend them, and to continue this most useful and unostentatious charity; and well and faithfully has the promise been fulfilled. She continued the Saturday school in her own house, for five years; and then converted it into an every-day school, where seventy poor children are instructed, at her sole expense, in reading, writing, sewing, knitting, the catechism, and church-music. But to return from this digression. After what has been said of the pious widow, with whom my mistress lived, it scarcely need be added, that she “died in the confidence of a certain faith, in the com-

fort of a reasonable, religious and holy hope.” That faith, that hope, was “only in the cross.” She disclaimed all merit of her own; feelingly bewailed her own unworthiness; and expressed her entire and sole reliance on Christ her Saviour. With her faculties unimpaired, her mind clear to the last, she took an affectionate farewell of her numerous relatives, who were privileged to attend on her sick bed; giving each of them some pious counsel and advice; and then sweetly fell asleep in Jesus in the eighty-first year of her age; having been a communicant in the Church for more than sixty years. Her last words were, “I die, and am happy.” How appropriate to her is that benediction from heaven, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.”*

CHAPTER XVI.

The Prayer Book is presented to a Clergyman, who resigns his parish on account of ill health.—His last Sermon.—Leaves home for the South.—Sail down the Hudson.—Early Reminiscences.—Steamboat adventure.—Eloquent defence of the Church.—Obituary notice of Rev. Mr. N——.

It was my fortune to remain not much more than a year under the roof of this most excellent lady; but the remembrance of those days is sweet. My young mistress, returning home one day from the Sunday-school, brought with her a neat new Prayer Book, which her minister had just presented her. As she showed it to her grandmother, she said, “Do you know, grandma, that our dear Mr. N—— is about going to the south for his health, and next Sunday he preaches his farewell sermon?”

Mrs. W—— replied that she knew it, for he had called the day before and informed her of his intentions.

“Oh, grandma!” said the little Charlotte, “how pale he looks, all but that little red spot on his cheek, and how short he breathes; and then he seems so feeble, I was afraid he would sink down in the pulpit. Do you think, dear grandmother, he will die?”

“I hope, my child, his useful life will be spared; but I fear his disease is too deeply seated ever to be removed; he himself has very little expectation of recovering. All things, however, are possible with God, and if He please ‘He can even yet raise him up and grant him a longer continuance amongst us;’ and with due submission to the divine will, I would humbly pray that he may live many years. His death would be a sore affliction to his friends, and a severe loss to the Church of Christ.”

“But is it not strange, grandma, that such good men, so young, so useful, and so much beloved, should be removed out of the world, while so many wicked, and profane, and worthless persons are spared ?”

“The dispensations of Providence, my dear Charlotte, are often very mysterious, although we doubt not they are ever righteous, merciful and wise. You know what the Scripture says, ‘the righteous is taken away from the evil to come,’* while ‘the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction.’† Mr. N— appears to be a Christian, ripe for glory, and God may see fit to take him speedily to his reward; besides, I fear we do not deserve a man of such eminent piety and talents, and God may also think proper to remove this burning and shining light, as a just punishment for our sins, in not having profited,

* Is. lvii. 1.

† Job xxi. 30.

as we ought, by his faithful and zealous labours.”

“O, how I wish,” said the little girl, “you had been at our Sunday-school to-day; Mr. N—— addressed the scholars very affectionately; and when he spoke of leaving us in a week or two, every scholar in the school burst into tears; for we all love him dearly. He said if he should ever return, he hoped to hear that we had all been good and dutiful children, and had improved by the instruction of our teachers; growing in grace as we grew in age. But if he should not come back, he hoped we would always keep in mind what he was going to say to us from those words of Solomon, ‘Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.’* And he then went on to tell us, that none of us were too young to remember our Creator; and that it was im-

* Eccles. xii. 1.

portant that we should do it now, for we know not how soon we must die. He said that Christ loved little children; and when he was on earth he took them in his arms, and blessed them, and said 'of such is the kingdom of heaven;' but then we must be good children if we would have Christ love us; and we must pray to God to change our hearts, for the hearts of children are naturally very wicked; and we must learn to love God and our neighbours, and do as our Bible tells us, and as our parents and teachers bid us, and then, whenever we die, we shall go to heaven; and he hoped we should all meet again there, if we met no more on earth. I will try to remember all he said, and will pray to our Heavenly Father to make me remember it as long as I live. He gave each of us a Prayer Book, and I saw the tears come into his eyes as he laid his hands upon my head and said, 'God preserve and bless you, my dear little

Charlotte.’ As I was coming home, I thought how happy I should feel if I had any little thing to give him to remember me by. You know he has been so much at our house, and when my dear father died he was so attentive and kind to us all, that I love him as a brother. And then I thought, if you would allow me, I would give him the Prayer Book I found last year, as he has given me a new one to-day; and I dare say, whenever he sees it, he will think of his ‘dear little Charlotte,’ as he used to call me.”

The good old lady was pleased with this expression of kindness on the part of her beloved grand-daughter; and, with her consent, I was the next day presented to her minister, Mr. N——. He was gratified with this new proof of the child’s affection, and promised to keep me by him as a token of her love.

The following Sunday he preached his last discourse, from those words of the Apostle

Paul, "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more."* He spoke of his approaching death with the greatest composure, and said that in going to a milder climate, he rather yielded to the urgent solicitations of his friends, than to any expectation he himself had of being benefited by it.

His exhortation to his people was eloquent and affecting in the highest degree. The whole congregation were dissolved in tears, as they listened to the persuasive language of the dying man. He conjured them not to depart from that church to which they had professed an attachment; but to keep steadily in the "old paths," to "hold fast the form of sound words," and "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

* Acts xx. 25.

Then, quoting the words of a late pious prelate, he said, with great emphasis, "Should you at any time be tempted to go away from your church, say with unshaken attachment, To whom should we go? Here are pure doctrine, and a primitive ministry and discipline, here are the words of eternal life, and we know and are sure that if we fail of obtaining eternal felicity, the loss must be attributed to our own neglect." After an earnest persuasion, to all his hearers, to "strive to enter in at the strait gate," and to "give diligence to make their calling and election sure," while the day of salvation lasted, he closed with those words of the Apostle, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."*

* Acts xx. 32.

The next day he took his departure for the south. He travelled by slow and easy stages, until he reached the Hudson; there he went on board a steamboat; and, attended by a single friend, he proceeded to New York. An incident occurred, on his passage down the river, which deserves to be recorded; as it serves to show how all the kindest charities of life, and the holiest affections of the heart, may be outraged, by persons of more zeal than knowledge, and more bigotry and cant, than good manners or good feeling.

My master had retired to the upper deck, far away from the gay and noisy crowd of passengers, that he might indulge, in solitude, his mournful meditations. There he sat alone, wrapped up in the ample folds of his cloak, to guard against the dews of evening, which now began to fall. His friend was pacing the deck in silence, while my master's thoughts were far away with that beloved flock which he

had just left ; or with that dear fire-side circle, that bright band of sisters, whom he was never to see again on earth. The memory of departed days came over him with a pleasing sadness, and the tear stole unbidden to his eye, and coursed down his cheek. Just then the boat was passing his native village, which stood on the western bank of the Hudson. It arrested his attention, and at once diverted his thoughts to another, but not less melancholy channel. The sun had sunk below the horizon, leaving a rich crimson glow behind ; and directly over his native town, shone forth in all its brightness and beauty, the “liquid eye of eve,” a fit emblem of his pure spirit which was soon to shine forth, like that star, for ever and ever. The house where he was born, the church in which he was baptized, and where he had so often worshipped, were distinctly to be seen, as the boat glided along. He riveted his eye upon them, and memory, busy memo-

ry, was occupied with the scenes of by-gone days, when the train of his meditations was rudely broken by a tall, gaunt personage in black, who thus accosted him, "And so I hear you are going to the south for your health?" My master replied by a slight inclination of the head, and a momentary pause ensued; but the stranger was not thus easily shaken off; lengthening his thin, dark visage, he began, in a whining tone, by telling my master that he looked as if he would not live long; that, understanding he was an Episcopalian, and feeling a deep interest in his soul's welfare, he considered it his duty to tell him that he thought his state a most dangerous one. Episcopalians, he said, do not believe in the necessity of a change of heart; they rely on their good works, not on the merits of Christ; and whoever belongs to this corrupt church, must abjure her errors and come out from her. Many other things he uttered against the

church, in the same coarse and unfeeling strain.

Neither the boldness nor the vulgarity of this attack discomposed or intimidated my young master. He heard the unknown assailant patiently through; but when he spoke of abjuring his faith, a flush of indignation mantled over his pale face. He rose, and elevating his manly form, he replied with a dignity and mildness befitting a minister of Christ, and in a strain of eloquence which I have never heard surpassed. He spoke with the utmost calmness of his own dissolution, as an event not far distant, and as one which he trusted, through the merits and mercies of his divine Redeemer, would consummate his felicity. "And why," he said, "should I fear to die in the bosom of that Church which is 'built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone?' Can I, a minister of the Episcopal

Church in these United States, forget that we boast our origin from a Church which, in reference to the soundness of her principles, the talents and piety of her clergy, and her efforts in the cause of the reformation, still maintains the proud title which at the first she acquired, of being the glory of the Reformed Churches; a Church which Cranmer, and Latimer, and Ridley enriched by their blood; in whose cause Chillingworth, and Hooker, and Horsley, exerted the strongest powers of intellect, and employed the most varied and profound erudition; which Barrow, Tillotson, Porteus, honoured by their eloquence; in which Andrews, and Taylor, and Horne, displayed the lustre of a fervent piety; a Church which, striking off the infirmities, the lukewarmness, and the weakness of old age, now comes forth in the vigour of apostolic youth, to carry the cross of the Saviour, that pledge of salvation, to the strongholds of pagan power; and to illu-

minate, with the light of scriptural truth, the regions where error and superstition have held their reign ?”

As my master pronounced this last eloquent period, the language of an eminent living prelate, the stranger slunk away, without a word in reply ; and Mr. N—— retired, exhausted with fatigue, to his birth in the cabin.

He took passage in the first packet which sailed from New York to Charleston ; and for a time, the sea air and the balmy breezes of the south seemed to revive him ; but he speedily sunk under his disease, and his spirit took its flight to the mansions of eternal rest and blessedness.

Shortly after his death, the following obituary notice appeared in one of the religious periodicals of the day ; which, out of respect to his memory, I take the liberty to transcribe.

“Died, at Charleston, on a journey for his

health, the Rev. W. H. N——. By an intense application to study, and diligent discharge of parochial duties, he induced a consumptive disease, which terminated in dissolution. A young man, dear to his parents and friends, dear to the congregation who had been blessed with his ministerial labours, and dear to the Church in general, he will long be remembered and lamented. Seldom have we been called to notice so promising a flower in the Church, blighted before it was full blown. Possessing genius, education, and talents, which fitted him for usefulness, he adorned them by a piety and virtue, surpassed by that of few of the same age. Well instructed in the principles of the Church, and under the most thorough conviction of their accordance with the gospel, he was scrupulously exact in the observance of her requisitions, and in the respect and reverence due to her established authorities. He had a solidity and firmness of character highly

becoming the sacred office. As a man, he was respected and beloved, because amiable and sincere; and as a Christian minister, faithful, circumspect, and exemplary. He is gone. Thus doth the providence of God, in wisdom which we cannot comprehend, see fit to take from us the young as well as the aged. And thus 'in the midst of life we are in death.' Blessed are those who, in 'the communion of the Catholic Church,' are met by death, 'in the confidence of a certain faith, in the comfort of a reasonable, religious, and holy hope, in favour with God, and in perfect charity with all the world.' In such a state, we trust, the subject of these remarks departed the present for a better life."

CHAPTER XVII.

The Prayer Book is given to a sailor.—Good advice.—

Forms of prayer to be used at sea.—Mariner's church.

—Sailor's home.—Voyage to Liverpool.—Daily service on ship-board.—Return voyage. Sickness and death.—Burial at Sea.

While my master was confined by illness to his boarding house in Charleston, he was frequently visited by one of the sailors on board the ship in which he came passenger from New York; a young man whom he had known from childhood, and for whom he felt a lively interest. On one of the visits, a few days before my master's decease, he presented me to this young seaman, as a token of his regard, begging him to keep me for his sake, and to make me the constant companion of his solitary hours. You will find this book, he said, next to the Bible, precious far above all other volumes, while you are journeying on

the great deep. The greater part of it is in the very words of scripture; and all of it is in harmony with the doctrines and precepts of the inspired volume. Wherever you may be, or in whatever circumstances you are placed, on sea, on land, in calm or storm, here are to be found forms of devotion suited to your particular case.

It would be well if sailors, before leaving home, would agree with their friends, whom they leave behind, their parents, brothers, sisters, wife, children, or whoever are dearest to them, that, on a certain hour, every day, they would each of them read certain portions of the liturgy. Thus, whether on the great deep, or in a foreign land, they would have the delightful consciousness that, at those times especially, their distant friends were present with them in spirit; that they still had a place in their memories and in their hearts. The Prayer Book might thus be made a golden

link in that chain of sympathy which binds the sailor and his family together, though oceans roll between them.

One portion of it is framed expressly for those who "go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters." Nor is it possible to conceive of a service more appropriate than these "forms of prayer to be used at sea;" or better calculated to lift the thoughts and heart to Him, "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand;" who "ruleth the raging of the sea, and stilleth the waves thereof when they arise." I advise you to commit to memory some portions of this service, that so, in the dark watches of the night, or in the violence of storms, when "the waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly," you may have a suitable form of words with which to offer your prayers to "the Lord who dwelleth on high;" who alone can deliver you out of your distress,

making “the storm to cease, so that the waves thereof are still;” and who alone can speak peace to your affrighted heart, saying, “It is I, be not afraid.” Let me particularly recommend to you, for this purpose, the “Prayers to be used in a storm at sea;” the “short prayers in respect of a storm;” the “thanksgiving after a storm;” consisting of the sixty-sixth and one hundred and seventh Psalms; and the “hymn of praise and thanksgiving after a dangerous tempest;” which is also a selection from the Psalms. These are soon learned, and may prove a comfort to you in times of your greatest need.

And now, my young friend, he added, and his countenance lighted up with a saintly expression, while his voice assumed a more subdued and solemn tone, “I am about to leave this world of sorrow and sin, and, I humbly trust, I shall soon ‘be with Christ, which is far better.’ Let me speak to you as a dying

man, who can now realize the vanity of all earthly things, and the necessity of seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. You were baptized in infancy ; you were confirmed a few years since, and have been to the holy communion, whenever an opportunity offered. You have a Bible which a pious mother, now in paradise, gave you, when you first left the parental roof, to become ‘a wanderer in the world’s wide way.’ Let that blessed book be ever a lamp unto your feet, and a light unto your path ; and you cannot then walk in darkness, for you shall have the light of life. So study and so practise its holy precepts, that when your change comes, you may have the comfortable hope of meeting that mother in the mansions of glory. I need not say that the richest treasure which you can possess on earth is this inspired volume, God’s own word to man ; and next to that is the Book of Common Prayer, which I

now present you, and which has been my constant companion. Keep it for my sake, for your own sake, as a precious gift; and whenever you look upon it, remember these my parting words. You are engaged in a pursuit, which is supposed to be surrounded with greater temptations than almost any other; and yet it is one which ought to make those who follow it, always serious and devout. How strikingly does the Psalmist describe the dangers of the ocean, the power and goodness of Almighty God in ruling it, and the gratitude which they ought to feel, who experience his merciful deliverance. ‘They that go down to the sea in ships; and occupy their business in great waters; these men see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For at his word the stormy wind ariseth; which lifteth up the waves thereof. They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep; their soul melteth away

because of the trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man; and are at their wit's end. So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, he delivereth them out of their distress. For he maketh the storm to cease, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad, because they are at rest; and so he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be. O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness; and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!"**

“It has been my fortune, in former years, to be much with sailors, and to know the moral dangers and temptations to which they are exposed; and I agree entirely with a late eminent and eloquent divine, who says, ‘If there be a class of individuals who, on all accounts, have a more than common claim on

Ps. cvii. 23—31.

the sympathy of Christians, because more than commonly exposed to moral tempests and dangers, may we not select sailors as that class; men whose business is in great waters, who from boyhood have been at home on the sea, whether in storm or calm; but whose opportunities of Christian instruction are, for the most part, wretchedly small; and who learn to steer to every harbour except that which lieth within the veil? The religious public have much to answer for on account of the neglect—of course we speak comparatively—which they have manifested towards sailors. Very little has ever yet been done towards ameliorating their moral condition. So soon as the sailor returns to port, after having been long tossed on distant seas, he is surrounded by miscreants, who seek to entice him to scenes of the worst profligacy, that they may possess themselves of his hard-earned gains. And Christian philanthropy has been very

slow in stepping in, and offering an asylum to the sailor, where he may be secure against the villany which would ruin body and soul. Christian philanthropy has been very slow in taking measures for providing, that, when he returned from his wanderings—probably to find many in the grave who had sent anxious thoughts after him as he ploughed the great deep, and who had vainly hoped to welcome him back—he should have the gospel preached to him, and the ministers of Christianity to counsel, and admonish, and encourage him. It is vain to say, that our churches have been open, and that the sailor, as well as the landsman, might enter, and hear the glad tidings of redemption. You are to remember, that for months, and perhaps even years, the sailor has been debarred from the means of grace; he has been in strange climes, where he has seen nothing but idolatry; even the forms of religion have been altogether kept from him;

and now he requires to be sought out, and entreated ; and unless in some peculiar mode you bring the gospel to him, the likelihood is the very smallest, of his seeking it for himself.' ”

“ “When I plead the cause of sailors, it seems to me as though the hurricane and the battle, the ocean with its crested billows, and war with its magnificently stern retinue, met and mingled to give force to the appeal. It seems as though stranded navies, the thousands who have gone down with the waves for their winding-sheet, and who await in unfathomable caverns, the shrill trumpet-peal of the archangel, rose to admonish us of the vast debt we owe those brave fellows who are continually jeopardizing their lives in our service. And then there comes also before me the imagery of a mother, who has parted, with many tears and many forebodings, from her sailor-boy ; whose thoughts have accompanied him, as none but those of a mother can, in his long

wanderings over the deep, and who would rejoice with all a mother's gladness, to know that where his moral danger was perhaps greatest, there was a church to receive him, and a minister to counsel him.' ”*

“ We have reason to bless God that such appeals as these to the sympathies of Christian philanthropists have not been in vain ; that of late years more earnest efforts have been put forth, and more liberal appropriations have been made, to provide Christian instruction for sailors. In many of the ports which you may visit, both in our own country and in England, you will find Episcopal churches, which are free to seamen and their families ; and a sailor's home ; and I cannot urge upon you too earnestly the importance of both these to your temporal and spiritual welfare. In New York there are two, and in Philadelphia

* Melvill's Sermons, pp. 413, 415.

there is, perhaps, the handsomest seamen's church in the world ; known as 'The Floating Church of the Redeemer.' If you live on shore, seek for lodgings in a sailor's home, and never neglect the services of the seaman's church. Be sure always to take your Prayer Book with you, and join in the responses. Make yourself known to the minister ; and should sickness, or other misfortune visit you, do not fail to ask for his advice and assistance ; in every difficulty you will find him your safest counsellor and friend. Above all, let it be your chief care to keep at the greatest possible distance from temptation ; avoid all scenes of riot and drunkenness ; go not in the way of sinners nor sit in the seat of the scornful ; but strive to walk always in the fear of God, and in the way of his commandments. You remember what the Apostle Paul says, 'We have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us ; which hope

we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.* By this he means, that hope is the anchor of the soul, which fastens it to heaven; 'that the Christian, whilst tossing on a tempestuous sea, is fast bound to another scene of being; and that, whilst the vessel is on the waters of time, the anchor is on the rock of eternity. The anchor has not been dropped in the rough waters which the Christian has to navigate; it rests where there is one eternal calm, and its hold is on a rock, which no action of the waves can wear down.' Cast your anchor, therefore, within the veil, for nowhere else can the soul find safe anchorage. Do not drop it down in the troubled sea of life, nor suffer it to fasten on any thing this side of the grave. In the smooth, calm haven of eternal rest, and there alone, it will seize fast hold of the Rock

* Heb. vi. 18, 19.

of Ages; and when your tempest-tossed bark has weathered out the storm, it shall be drawn into the desired harbour, and float securely and forever on its tranquil bosom. In the beautiful language of one of our hymns—

‘ There, anchored safe, your weary soul
Shall find eternal rest;
Nor storms shall beat, nor billows roll,
Across your peaceful breast.’ ”

The young man listened attentively to this affectionate counsel, and I thought I saw a tear, now and then, glistening in his eye; for he was, like most sailors, tender-hearted, and possessed of noble and generous feelings. He evidently strove to conceal his emotions; and when Mr. N—— had finished, he grasped his hand and bade him a last and hurried farewell. In a few days he sailed for Liverpool. It providentially happened that the captain of the ship was a pious man, who called the

crew together each day, when the weather permitted, and read a portion of the Bible, and then made use of some of the prayers in the liturgy. As the ship had been supplied with Prayer Books, before leaving port, these were distributed among the officers and men, many of whom united in the responses, and thus gave additional interest to the service. On our arrival in Liverpool, my master took lodgings in a very comfortable sailor's home, where there was a library and reading-room, and where family worship was observed, each night and morning. On Sundays he went to the Seamen's Floating Church; and, on his first visit there, he made himself known to the minister, who spoke a few kind words to him, and gave him some religious books and tracts. It being communion Sunday, he had the privilege of receiving the sacred memorials of a dying Saviour's love; and it proved to be his last communion. The frequent opportunities

which he now enjoyed of the means of grace, and which he diligently improved, were evidently blessed by the Holy Spirit; and he appeared to be growing daily more and more fitted for that eternal state upon which he was soon to enter. The ship had been but a few days at sea, on her return voyage to New York, when my young master was seized with a violent disease, which, in less than a week, terminated his short life. From the moment when he was first taken ill, he seemed to think that he should not recover. Although suffering much pain at times, he was perfectly patient and resigned; and expressed his humble hope of forgiveness and acceptance with God, through the merits and mercies of Christ our Redeemer. Calling the captain one day to his birth, and handing to him his mother's Bible, he asked him to read aloud the fourteenth chapter of St. John's gospel. When this was done, he took me from under his pillow, and

requested him also to read a part of "the order for the visitation of the sick," together with the "prayer for a sick person, when there appeareth but small hope of recovery." The portion of scripture and the prayers, which the captain read with great devotion and feeling, greatly comforted my master; and in a few hours after, he calmly fell asleep in Jesus.

The next day the usual preparations were made for his funeral. The body, enclosed in canvass, with a heavy weight at the foot to facilitate its sinking, was laid upon a board, covered with the ship's flag, and placed in the gangway, ready, at the appointed moment, to be committed to the bosom of the ocean. All hands were summoned on deck to witness the solemn ceremony. It was indeed a sublime scene, such as could not fail to impress every beholder with reverence and awe. The sea was perfectly calm, and the ship lay almost motionless on its tranquil surface, only rising

and falling with the slowly heaving billows; the sun was just sinking to rest in the western waves, and his bright beams shone like molten gold over the waste of waters. The captain stood at the head of the corpse, with his men around him, and began those words of comfort and hope, "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord." As he went on with the admirable burial-service, all eyes were filled with tears; and never shall I forget the thrilling effect of those sublime words, "Forasmuch as it hath pleased almighty God, in his wise providence, to take out of this world the soul of our deceased brother, we therefore commit his body to the deep, to be turned into corruption, looking for the resurrection of the body when the sea shall give up her dead, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ; who at his coming shall change our vile body, that it may be like his glorious body, according to the mighty work-

ing whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.” When these words had been said, the last remains of my dear master were plunged into the sea, to sink down into its lowest depths; but his spirit, I trust, was on high, in the calm haven of eternal rest.

On the arrival of the ship in New York, his effects were sent to his friends in the western part of the state; and I was soon after presented to the clergyman with whom I now remain.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Visit to the Oneida Indians, in New York.—Interesting religious services among them.—Confirmation.—Communion.—An Indian Council.—The Liturgy admirably adapted to the circumstances of the heathen.—Duty of Christians in reference to the Indian tribes.

SEVERAL years have passed away since I became the property of my present master; and it has been my privilege to travel with him through most of the United States. In the course of my travels, I have witnessed many interesting and instructive scenes, which might be detailed, were it not that I am afraid of protracting my history to an unreasonable length. Some events however have occurred, since those related in the last chapter, which are too important to be omitted in a history like this, and which I shall therefore now relate.

The first was, the visit of Bishop H—— to the Indian settlement at Oneida Castle, in the western part of the State of New York. The Bishop, at that time on one of his diocesan tours, passed a night at my master's house, and invited him to go with him the next day to see the Oneidas. My master, pleased with so favourable an opportunity of visiting this interesting people, arose very early, and putting me in his pocket, proceeded with the Bishop to the Castle. It was a delightful morning in September; the air was fresh and exhilarating; and, as they had about twenty miles to ride, the top of their carriage was thrown back, that they might have an uninterrupted view of the country through which they travelled. I mention this last circumstance, in order to convey a more distinct idea of the scene which follows.

Information having been previously conveyed to the Indians, of the Bishop's intended

visit, a party of fifty or sixty of their tribe, with their chiefs and interpreter, came out several miles on horseback to meet him, and to escort him to their church. They had been waiting on the road for several hours; and when they saw us approach, they hastily remounted their horses, arranged themselves on each side of us, in single file; and, thus attended, we proceeded on towards their settlement. It was indeed a novel spectacle, and a most gratifying proof of the affection which these natives bore towards their spiritual father. Never shall I forget the delight with which the Bishop, rubbing his hands, exclaimed, "What would some of my Lords Bishops of England say to this? The Bishop of New York, in a one-horse carriage, driven by one of his presbyters, escorted by half a hundred natives of the forest, dressed in their fanciful costume, and all going to witness and participate in the most solemn

Christian ordinances; and in a church, too, erected by these Indians themselves!" As the procession moved along, groups of Indian women and children, with their clean white blankets, some with blue mantles, wrapped around them, might be seen hurrying across the fields towards their place of worship. This was a neat edifice of wood, standing in a retired and quiet spot, and possessing all the requisites for a decent and orderly performance of the service. The Bishop, and such of the neighbouring clergy as could be present, having taken their seats in the chancel, the services commenced with a few verses from the Psalms, translated into Indian, and sung by about one hundred natives in the gallery, with whom many of those below united. The church was entirely filled; and it was estimated that more than five hundred of the persons present were Indians. A more devout and attentive audience I have never seen.

There is always, indeed, an appearance of gravity and decorum in the Indians, which is peculiarly impressive, as they stand or kneel, with their eyes cast down, and their mantles wrapped closely over their heads. Nothing can be more striking than the reverence with which the pious Indian approaches the altar, to receive the holy communion. Those who have witnessed it once will never forget it. On the occasion now alluded to, the usual service, which consists of a literal translation of the liturgy into the Mohawk tongue, was read by their catechist and teacher, in which the whole congregation united with much apparent seriousness and devotion. The responses were made in an audible and solemn tone, and the hymns of praise were chanted forth by hundreds of voices, in a manner which proved that they "sang with the spirit, and with the understanding also."

Immediately after prayers, the holy rite of

confirmation was administered to ninety-four native Indians, and three whites, who had been previously instructed for that purpose; and after that, about fifty partook of the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Never have I witnessed a more impressive and solemn scene. To behold nearly one hundred of these once wild sons of the forest, not only civilized, but Christianized, and coming forward of their own accord, to "renew and ratify the solemn vow which was made at their baptism;" publicly renouncing their idolatry, and openly "professing the faith of Christ crucified;" what heart could remain unaffected at the sight?

The nature of the service was evidently perfectly well understood by them; and if we may form an opinion from the seriousness and humility of their demeanour, and it is only by the "outward appearance" that man can judge, they all came forward with sincere and

pious resolutions of living agreeably to their solemn engagements. After confirmation and the communion were administered, the Bishop addressed them, through the medium of an interpreter, in his usual affectionate and impressive manner; but in the plainest and most simple language, suited to their comprehension. He was listened to with the profoundest attention and respect, for they looked up to him as their spiritual father, and always addressed him by that endearing title.

At the request of some of their chief men, the Bishop afterwards met about two hundred chiefs and warriors in council, on their ancient council ground at Butternut-grove. The warriors, as they are termed, or principal men of the nation, to the number of one hundred and eighty, were seated on the ground in a large circle, and within that about fifteen or twenty chiefs were ranged in a circle around the Bishop and his attending clergy, for whom chairs had

been provided in the centre. One of the chiefs then rose and explained, through an interpreter, the object of this council, which was to obtain their "Father's" advice in relation to some difficulties at present existing in a remote part of the tribe. The Bishop gave them the solicited advice, in a very friendly and affectionate manner; and after he sat down, the council was addressed by "the chief orator of their nation," in a most animated, and, judging from the effect produced, in a most eloquent speech. The whole scene was highly picturesque, and would have afforded an admirable subject for the pencil of the artist. The chiefs and warriors, ranged after their ancient custom, in concentric circles around their spiritual father, listening with respectful and profound attention to his Christian counsel; the numerous little groups of Indian women and children, scattered all around, as near the outer circle as they could conveniently ap-

proach, and where they might hear the different speakers, the beautiful grove, waving its rich foliage above their heads, the luxuriant fields of grain around, the fruit of their own labour and industry, formed altogether a picture on which the eye of the Christian or the painter might repose with delight. It brought to my mind the celebrated interview and treaty of William Penn, with the Indians of Pennsylvania.

At the conclusion of the council, the head chief presented the Bishop with a string of wampum, in the name of the whole tribe, as a token of respect, and a solemn pledge of their unshaken fidelity.

Only ten years before, a church was erected for their special benefit, and principally with funds arising from the sale of some of their lands. Since that time, through the divine blessing, they have been gradually improving in the arts of civilization; and numbers of

them, we trust, have attained, and are attaining, that "knowledge which maketh wise unto salvation." The inimitable liturgy of the Church, faithfully translated into their native tongue, has doubtless been a powerful auxiliary to their religious instruction. While it exhibits to their untutored minds the great truths of revelation, in plain and simple terms, while it unfolds the whole scheme of redemption in a clear and connected manner, it gives them a part to perform in the solemn services of the sanctuary, and supplies them with language, pure, simple, and scriptural, with which to offer up their devotions to the throne of the Most High.

Let those who deny that our Church has made ample provision for the spiritual instruction and improvement of all her children, and let those, too, who doubt that a prescribed form of service is adapted to the circumstances of the heathen, visit the Oneidas in their house

of worship. Let them witness the profound humility with which the confessions are made, the deep reverence, the fixed attention, with which they listen to the Sacred Scriptures; the fervour and devotion with which the prayers are responded, and the hymns of praise chanted forth, by the united voices of the congregation. Here they may see a practical proof of the efficacy of our forms and ordinances, in instructing and enlightening the most ignorant and savage tribes; and they may also see that our liturgy is admirably suited to all classes and conditions of men, when they meet for public prayers and praises. Here, too, they may see that our church is not unmindful of her duty to the heathen; that she is ever ready to extend to them her own invaluable privileges and blessings, as opportunities offer, and means are given. And while we conceive that the first duty of Christians is to make provision for those “who are

of the same household of faith," their next duty undoubtedly is to provide for the spiritual wants of the heathen at home. And it becomes more imperatively our duty, to do all in our power to promote the temporal and eternal welfare of the Indians among us, from the consideration of the numberless wrongs which they have received at our hands; and from the mournful reflection, too, that they are fast fading from the land, and that ere long reparation will be impossible; for, like their own native forests, they will have passed away.

CHAPTER XIX.

Oneidas at Green Bay.—Prayer Book's extensive travels.

—Interesting statistics of the Church.—Tour through the Southern and South-western States.—Bishop of Tennessee.—Interesting anecdotes of him, and of the Bishop of North Carolina.

A FEW years after my visit to the Oneida Indians, as related in the last chapter, about eleven hundred of the tribe, including all those who belonged to the Episcopal Church, removed to the Wisconsin Territory, and settled on their lands at Duck Creek, in the vicinity of Green Bay. Their faithful missionary and his family soon followed them, and he is now labouring among them with his customary zeal. It so happened, that I had an opportunity of spending some days within a few miles of this their new location, of seeing several of the chiefs of their nation, and of

hearing from them of their improvement in the arts of civilized life, and their advancement in the Christian religion; of all which I shall presently give an account to my readers.

I had been the property of my present master about ten years, when he accepted of an agency in the church, which required him to resign his pastoral charge, and to travel through a large portion of our country. As I was his constant companion, I had an opportunity which very few enjoy, of witnessing the growth and prosperity of the Church in every part of our land. And while we saw much, very much, that called for our gratitude and praise, we were frequently led to mourn over the apathy of Episcopalians, in not putting forth greater efforts for the extension of our beloved Zion, especially in our new states and territories. Wherever we went, we saw "fields white unto the harvest," but no labourers to put in the sickle and reap;

and often did my master exclaim, Oh ! that the members of our communion could witness the spiritual destitution of those who are of the “same household of faith;” how fervently would they then pray “the Lord of the harvest, to send forth labourers into his harvest !”

As a proof of the rapid extension of the Church in the United States, I mention the following facts, gathered from authentic documents. In the year 1792, eight years after the consecration of our first Bishop, there were but one hundred and ninety-three Episcopal clergymen in all our states and territories, including the five Bishops, who were then living. In 1820, there were three hundred and thirty-one; having increased only one hundred and thirty-eight, in a period of twenty-eight years. In 1832, there were five hundred and sixty-four, including twelve Bishops; in 1842, there were eleven hundred and forty-five, with twenty-one Bishops; and now, 1850, there are

twenty-eight dioceses, thirty-two Bishops, and one thousand five hundred and twenty-one priests and deacons. These are interesting facts, and well calculated to cheer and animate the hearts of those who love the ways of our Zion. “O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions’ sakes, I will wish thee prosperity. Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek to do thee good.”

My master’s first official tour was through the southern and south-western states. It would occupy too much space, in a history like this, to relate the many incidents that occurred on this extensive journey, which we were about three months in performing. In most of the large cities through which we passed, on the Atlantic coast, we found the Church in a highly prosperous state; but in

the south-western portion of our country, it languishes for want of more Episcopal supervision. We had the pleasure of meeting several times, in our tour, with the Bishop of Tennessee, who had been making an official visit to the scattered congregations in that extensive region. In naming this excellent prelate, an anecdote is brought to mind, which so forcibly illustrates the value of a single Prayer Book, that I shall here place it on record. It was related at a meeting in behalf of a Prayer Book Society, where my master was present; and I am sure my readers will thank me for giving it to them in the speaker's own words.

“Most interesting anecdotes of the acceptableness of the Prayer Book,” said the right reverend speaker, “and of its great usefulness in turning sinners to righteousness, have been often related. The country is full of them. I could occupy much time in showing how

powerful it has been, through grace, in extending the borders of the Redeemer's kingdom, and in building men up in our most holy faith. I will content myself with two, but those very remarkable instances. A clergyman, of distinguished intelligence and benevolence, was travelling some years ago in a region remote from the strongholds of the Church; detained at a country place by an accident which happened to his carriage, he met with an interesting boy, with whom he was so much pleased, that on parting from him in the morning, he gave him a Prayer Book. There was then no acquaintance with the Church on the part of him or any of his family; perhaps not even among their neighbours. I have no time to trace his subsequent career, nor do I know when the influence first exerted itself on his mind, nor what its process was in his heart. But I know that that boy is now the Bishop of North Carolina.

“A young man, a graduate of one of our southern colleges, was elected to a tutorship. As tutor, it was his duty to conduct the morning devotions of the chapel. He was not then a religious man. As he himself told me, he did not know how to pray. It was a most irksome, and it must be feared, an unprofitable task. A friend had compassion on him, and gave him a Prayer Book. It was the first that he had ever seen, and it rendered that easy which before was difficult and unsatisfactory. I know not how long after this it was that he attached himself to the Episcopal Church. But I know that that young man is now the Bishop of Tennessee.”

These are most encouraging facts, to those who are engaged in the gratuitous distribution of the Book of Common Prayer; and to them may be addressed the emphatic exhortation of the wise man, “In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand;

for thou knowest not whether shall prosper,
either this or that or whether they both shall
be alike good.”

CHAPTER XX.

Tour through the great Lakes to the Wisconsin Territory.—Diocese of New York; its rapid growth.—Detroit; prosperity of the Church there.—Mackinac; lay reading by an Officer of the Fort.—Green Bay Mission School.—Oneida Indians at Duck Creek.—Their zeal and liberality.—Bishop of Michigan's visit to them.—The Prayer Book finishes its travels, and settles quietly down in a parish.

SOON after my master's return from his southern journey, he had occasion to make the tour of the upper lakes, for the purpose of visiting some of our missionary stations in the Wisconsin Territory; and I was again his companion in his travels. We left home in the month of July, 1836, for the "far west," and travelled leisurely through the state of New York; as my master found it necessary to officiate in most of the principal towns on our route. I shall not attempt a description

of the beautiful country through which we rode, nor of the interesting voyage across those mighty inland seas, which form the northern boundary of our country. An account of all that we saw and heard, would fill many such volumes as this. That which most gratified my master, was the evidence of the rapid increase and healthful prosperity of the Church, every where so apparent; but in no portion of our country so much so, as in Western New York; for he remembered to have heard the late venerable Bishop of Virginia say, that when he was ordained deacon in the city of New York, he was the sixth or seventh clergyman in the diocese; a diocese, or rather two dioceses, which now number more than three hundred and fifty clergymen; nearly one-fourth part of the whole number in the United States. And this unparalleled increase is manifestly owing, under God, to their diocesan missionary efforts.

But to return to our journey ; passing through Western New York, by the usual stage route, we stopped a single day to view the stupendous falls of Niagara, that sublimest of all earthly scenes, and then took passage at Buffalo in a steamer for Detroit. Here we were detained several days, waiting for a boat to take us to the upper lakes. We had thus an opportunity of gathering some interesting facts in relation to the church in that city. Only thirteen years before, the church was organized ; and until within three or four years, it remained under the patronage of the General Missionary Society. For a long time, the congregation, being without a pastor, was not only kept together, but actually increased, by lay reading. The year we visited it, they contributed more than a thousand dollars towards the support of missions ; thus paying back, with large increase, the funds which they formerly drew from the missionary trea-

sury. Their present prosperity is a striking proof how much good may be accomplished, by fostering the infant churches in our new settlements.

Leaving Detroit, and passing up the Detroit river, across the little lake St. Clair, we entered the mighty Huron. Our first considerable stopping place was at the beautiful island of Mackinac, midway between lakes Huron and Michigan. Here we found a few Episcopalians, who had long been in the habit of meeting together every Lord's day, when one of the officers of the garrison read for them the daily service and a sermon. It was delightful to see this pious soldier gathering his companions in arms around him, in the performance of the public duties of devotion. Before we left, he sent to my master a sum of money which he desired might be appropriated to the spread of the gospel. Thus, as it was with good Cornelius the Roman soldier, we trust

not only his prayers, but his alms, “came up as a memorial before God.”

In a day or two after leaving Mackinac, we reached the mission school at Green Bay; where we remained about two weeks. Here we found seventy Indian children, between five and fifteen years of age; the greater part of whom were Menomenees and Oneidas. It was most gratifying to witness the improvement which they had made in the knowledge of divine things, and in human learning, under the faithful, zealous, and devoted superintendent and teachers, who first had charge of the school, as well as those to whom it was now entrusted. And it is painful to think, that after all the labour and expense bestowed upon this establishment, it has been broken up; but the removal of the Indian tribes from that territory rendered this result unavoidable.

While at Green Bay, my master was pro-

videntially prevented from visiting the missionary station at Duck Creek, as he had intended, and was most anxious to do. He however received a visit from their excellent missionary, accompanied by three chiefs of the Oneida tribe, from whom he learned that their missionary establishment was in a flourishing condition; that there were eleven hundred souls belonging to the whole tribe of Oneidas at Duck Creek; of whom, five hundred belonged to the missionary parish, and eighty of these were communicants; that the tribe had made considerable advancement in civilization, and now cultivate their farms, and enjoy the comforts of settled domestic life. They expressed a strong desire to have another edition of the Prayer Book printed for them in the Mohawk language, as the present one was nearly exhausted. They further stated to my master, that while destitute of a clergyman, which was for several years, one of their own

tribe had officiated by a license from the Bishop of New York, as lay reader, and thus kept them from wandering into strange pastures ; that they had persevered, through much opposition and many discouragements, in adhering firmly to the Episcopal Church ; and they were resolved, by God's help, to live and die within her bosom. As a proof of their zeal, it should be remarked that they defray one-half of the missionary's salary, and pay one hundred dollars a year towards the support of a school for their children. The chiefs have made an appropriation of two thousand dollars for the erection of a church, and five hundred dollars for building a parsonage house. One of them also made a donation of two hundred dollars towards the purchase of a bell for the church ; and they have erected a school-house, at a cost of about three hundred dollars. The sale or exchange of some of their lands placed funds in their hands, a portion of which they

have thus set apart for the service of Almighty God.*

I cannot better conclude my account of this interesting people, than by giving the following statement from the Bishop of Michigan's address to his diocese, in 1837 :

“I visited the Oneida mission station, under charge of the Rev. Mr. Davis, nine miles distant from Green Bay. The morning after my arrival, I was waited upon and received by the vestry of the church, and the chiefs of the nation. At the time of service, they walked before me in perfect silence, until we reached the church, and then in the most polite and kind manner, welcomed me to the spot which they had selected for the tribe to worship the Lord. The building is made of hewn logs, with a neat vestry-room attached. On entering the church, the whole congregation rose

* Second Annual Report of the Board of Missions.

and chanted in their language, the ‘Te Deum.’ It is impossible for me to describe the feeling experienced on this occasion. I was completely overpowered with the scene; and I could have freely shed tears of joy, thus to witness the inhabitants of the forest singing hymns of praise to God. The services were read in their own language, by their pastor. The responses were well made by the whole congregation. I preached to them through an interpreter; after which I confirmed fifty-four persons, several of whom were past three score years. I also administered the communion to about seventy persons. Seldom, if ever, have I seen more apparent devotion in any assembly of worshippers. Every one appeared to be entirely absorbed in the duties in which he was engaged. After the services had been finished, the utmost stillness prevailed for a few minutes. There was no haste manifested to escape from the house of God, as is

too often the case in some of our congregations. Those who were in the pews nearest the chancel, then rose and came to me; and one by one took me by the hand, and silently retired. This was done by the whole congregation, without the least confusion or noise. I most fervently invoked the blessing of God for each and for all; and could not help exclaiming again and again, What hath the Lord wrought! What an evidence of the power of the gospel of Christ! After spending a short time with Mr. Davis and his family, I left 'the nation,' and returned to Green Bay. It is delightful to witness the interest and zeal manifested by the missionary and his wife, for the promotion of the religion of Jesus in the hearts of this interesting people. They are the only white persons among them, and of course must daily forego the pleasures of social intercourse, and those comforts which they have been accustomed to enjoy with friends.

I trust they will be rewarded a thousand fold for their self-denying labours, and will be able to present many souls as their ‘joy and crown of rejoicing.’ ”

Having accomplished the object which took him to Green Bay, my master went on board a steamboat, passed round Lake Michigan to Mackinac, and returned by the same route that he came ; nor did any thing occur in our journey home, which is deemed worthy of being recorded. I now occupy a quiet position on his study table, without any prospect of ever resuming my travels, or of witnessing any other than the ordinary events incident to an old-established parish.

CHAPTER XXI.

The more the Liturgy is studied, the more it will be prized.—Testimony of the Rev. Adam Clarke.—The Prayer Book's parting advice.—Concluding reflections.

I MUST now bring my history to a close. Happy should I be, could I flatter myself that the story of my life had contributed, in any degree, to the pleasure or instruction of those who have given it a perusal. Perhaps it may have been instrumental in removing, or softening down, some of the many prejudices which are entertained against the doctrines and worship of our apostolic Church, by those who have never made her articles and liturgy the subject of serious examination. Perhaps it may have confirmed in others, a rational attachment already felt, for this “form of sound words,” and this “faith once delivered unto the saints.”

In either case, my labour will not have been altogether in vain ; “ and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.”

Certain I am, that if persons would take a little more pains to instruct themselves in the nature of the Christian Church, and bring to the investigation “ an honest and good heart,” disposed to learn and embrace the truth for the love of it, the result would be a firm conviction that no church in Christendom is more sound and scriptural in doctrine, more apostolic in ministry, more pure and primitive in worship, than the Protestant Episcopal Church in these United States ; for all of which she is mainly indebted, under God, to her truly evangelical liturgy ; and “ Wo to the declining Church that hath no gospel liturgy !”

From this exhaustless fountain, the thirsty soul may draw consolations, refreshing as the waters of Horeb to the weary and fainting Israelites. It only requires to be fully known,

to be esteemed and loved. Those who have used it with such spiritual feelings and affections as it is eminently calculated to inspire, will say of it, as did the celebrated Wesleyan Methodist, Dr. Adam Clarke, "Next to the Bible, it is the book of my understanding and my heart." What the pious Bishop Horne says of the Psalms, will happily apply to the services of our Church; "They suit mankind in all situations; grateful as the manna which descended from above, and conformed itself to every palate. He who hath once tasted their excellencies, will desire to taste them again; and he who tastes them oftenest will relish them the best."

In taking leave of my readers, I would earnestly press upon them the duty of diligently improving all the means of grace which, in this land of gospel light, are so abundantly afforded them. "Take heed that the light which is in you be not darkness. Learn duly

to prize, and to profit by your privileges. Learn to pray with the heart, and pray with the understanding also. Keep your feet when ye repair to the house of God; and offer not the sacrifice of fools; but worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. And remember ever, that in vain you have this holy book of prayer in your hands, or in your houses, if it maintain not, at the same time, its due place in your memories, your hearts, and affections.”

It has been my fortune to pass through every variety of scene, which ever falls to the lot of man, in this his earthly pilgrimage; and the experience of my whole life has convinced me that religion is the one only thing needful; the one only object worthy the pursuit of a rational and immortal soul. My character and situation have often led me, not only to the abodes of wretchedness and want, to the houses of mourning and affliction, but to the habitations also of the rich and powerful; to the

halls of mirth, and joy, and gladness. I have witnessed scenes of the deepest distress, and of as unalloyed felicity, as any thing terrestrial can be. I have been with the smiling infant, when its first days were consecrated to the Lord by baptism; and I have been by the death-bed of the aged pilgrim, bowed down with the infirmities, and cares, and sufferings, of four-score years. I have been with the blooming bride, where all was festivity and joy; and I have been with the broken-hearted widow, when she and her fatherless children were weeping over the grave of him, who was their only earthly support and comfort. I have seen the young man in the summer of life, the joy of his parent's heart, gradually wasting away under the slow and sure decay of a lingering consumption; and I have seen the strong man suddenly hurried out of the world, in the midst of life and health. I have been with the poor, despised beggar, when about

to exchange his sorrows and sufferings for a place of rest in Abraham's bosom ; and I have seen the rich, and the great, and the powerful, reluctantly bid adieu to their wealth, their greatness, and their power, with fearful apprehensions of that undying wretchedness, which awaits those who " have received their consolation in this world."

But into whatever scenes I have been thrown, this conviction has ever been brought home to my heart, that religion is the only true wisdom, and the only abiding happiness. She is the only support and consolation, when all other helps fail. In inexperienced youth, she is the best and safest guide ; in more advanced years, she is the wisest counsellor and the truest friend ; and in old age, she alone can make " the hoary head a crown of glory." In affliction, she sustains and comforts the mourner, by teaching him not to sorrow as others who have no hope ; in prosperity, she gives a zest

to all the enjoyments of life by making them rational and innocent; and in death, that last great change, which cometh alike to all, she dispels the dark, portentous cloud which hangs over the grave, and exhibits the tomb to the trembling soul, as the gate which opens upon the mansions of immortal felicity and glory. Of religion therefore alone may it emphatically be said, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

And whenever I hear the honest inquirer, who desires to make this religion his own, asking for the old paths, the good way, that he may walk therein, and find rest for his soul, I long to point him to that branch of the church catholic, in which it is my privilege to be an humble minister. I wish to say to him, in the beautiful and affecting language of another, not doubting that, after a fair trial, he will adopt it as his own; "For my own part, I have looked anxiously into the character and

working of many systems of religion, and I trust that I know how to respect those who cannot see with my eyes; but, after all my searchings, I find no church like the old one. I love the shade of the old vine, and the shelter of the old wall within which my fathers lived well and died happily. I cling to their prayers, their ordinances, their grave-stones, to their 'Lord, and faith, and baptism,' to their 'Father and our Father, to their God and our God.' It is delightful to me, in a shifting, fleeting, dying world, to find something which lasts. And I trust, through God's infinite grace, to be an humble, watchful, loving worshipper, in this holy, happy company of the Lord's people, till I change the church on earth for the church in heaven."

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II

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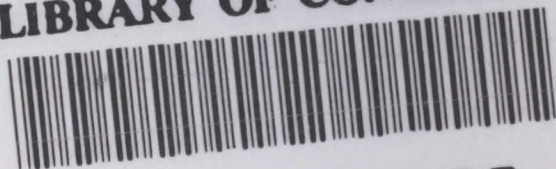
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